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ART. I.—1. *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Special Report of the Prudential Committee, on the control to be exercised over Missionaries and Mission Churches.* Printed for the use of the Board at the Annual Meeting.* Revised edition. Press of T. R. Marvin.

2. *Correspondence between the Cherokee and Choctaw Missions, the Rev. S. B. Treat, and the Prudential Committee.* Missionary Herald, October, 1848.

It is a matter of notoriety that the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, have for several years been sorely harassed on account of their supposed patronage or tolerance of slavery. Those known to the country as abolitionists, have felt it to be a duty to expostulate with the Board from time to time, for receiving money from the owners of slaves, for employing slaveholding missionaries, and for sustaining mission churches in which slaveholders were received as members.

* Also published in the Missionary Herald for October, 1848.

The Board have thus been constrained to take action on this subject, and on several occasions have given deliverances which seemed to satisfy, for the time, the great body of their patrons. Still the matter has not been suffered to rest. With a view apparently of having the subject finally disposed of, the Board in 1847 adopted the following resolution, viz. "That the Prudential Committee be requested to present a written report at the next annual meeting, on the nature and extent of the control which is to be exercised over the missionaries under the care of the Board; and the moral responsibility of the Board for the nature of the teaching of the missionaries, and for the character of the churches."

In the meantime, the Prudential Committee directed the Rev. S. B. Treat, one of the secretaries, to visit the Cherokee and Choctaw Missions, "to ascertain, as fully as practicable, the state and prospects of those missions; and to inquire more particularly into their relations to the subject of slavery." Mr. Treat devoted seventeen weeks to this visitation. He held full conference with the missionaries, and at his request, each mission addressed a letter to the committee, exhibiting "their views and principles in detail," on the subject of slavery. Subsequently he drew up a report to the Prudential Committee of his visit, which report, together with the letters just mentioned, and the reply made by the committee through Mr. Treat, are all published in the *Missionary Herald* for October, 1848.

The report of the Prudential Committee, above mentioned, was submitted to the Board at its late meeting in September last, "but as the members had not time to give the subject that considerate attention which its importance demanded, the final disposition of the same was postponed." Mr. Treat's report on his mission, and the correspondence to which it gave rise, were read to the Board, and by them referred to a committee who reported that they abstained from expressing any opinion either on the letters of the missions or on that of Mr. Treat in reply, because they constitute a part of an unfinished correspondence, and because no final action could, with propriety, be had at that time. It was therefore resolved that "the whole subject should be left for the present, where it now is, in the hands of the Prudential Committee." Neither of these important documents, therefore, has yet received the sanction of the Board. In

the meantime they are published, in various forms, for information and discussion.

There are several reasons which determine us to call the attention of our readers to these documents. In the first place the principles contained in the Report of the Prudential Committee on the control of missionaries, are of great importance, affecting the whole nature and organization of the church. In the next place, those principles, and the whole subject, have as direct a bearing on the missionary operations of our church, as upon those of the American Board. Thirdly, it is to be presumed that the very design of the extensive publication of these papers, is to elicit friendly discussion. And finally, the first and most stringent application of the principles of Mr. Treat's letter, is to ministers and churches of one of our own presbyteries.

The questions embraced in the Report are discussed with singular skill and wisdom. In most points, we are happy in agreeing with its excellent authors. From some of their positions we are forced to dissent; and as far as Mr. Treat's letter is concerned, dissent must assume the form of a solemn protest, which, in that particular case, every presbyterian is entitled to enter.

The first class of subjects discussed in this Report relate to the general principles of ecclesiastical polity.

It is specially interesting to find that principles which retired men have gathered, after much study, from the scriptures, are those which practical men are led to adopt from stress of circumstances. The providence of God is forcing on the church views of its nature and polity, very different from those which theorists have in many instances entertained. It is well known e. g. that it was the common doctrine of all denominations that ordinations sine titulo are unscriptural; that the office of an evangelist was confined to the early age of the church; that those thus designated in the New Testament, were the vicarii of the apostles, vested with extraordinary powers for a special purpose and a limited time. To congregationalists no less than to prelatists, a bishop without charge was as much a solecism as a husband without a wife. A call from the people, in some form, was regarded as an essential part of a call to the ministry. Even presbyterians, though their principles involved no such conclusion, were led by their circumstances, to entertain a like,

disapprobation of such ordinations. They were an inconvenience. The whole land was possessed. No more ministers than parishes were needed, and therefore it was thought wrong to create them.

It is curious to see how all these parties have been driven, by the course of events, from their theory on this subject. Rome, petrified in one rigid form, cannot change, and therefore perpetrates the absurdity of ordaining men to extinct or imaginary dioceses. Hence we hear of the bishop of Heliopolis, or Ecbatana, or Hieropolis, even here in America. The Independents when brought into contact with the heathen, were for a long time in a strait what to do. They felt that it was a crying sin to allow their fellow men to perish in ignorance of the gospel. Christ, however, had provided, according to their system, no means of sending the gospel beyond the limits of organized churches. The office of evangelists was obsolete. Nothing therefore was to be done but to allow the heathen to perish, or to endeavour to plant churches so near them that they could individually be brought under Christian influence. Puritan piety soon burnt off these tow bonds of a narrow system. The absurdity that a church, commissioned and required to preach the gospel to every creature, could not lawfully have any preachers except among those already Christians, was soon discarded. Almost every accessible portion of the heathen world has been visited and blessed, by ministers ordained in violation of the fundamental principles of original congregationalism. Nay the old doctrine seems to be well nigh forgot. This Report says with as much confidence as though there was not a congregationalist alive, "The denial that a missionary is an office bearer until a Christian church has invited him to take the oversight of it in the Lord, is made in utter forgetfulness, as it would seem, of the commission by which a preaching ministry was originally instituted. The primary and pre-eminent design of that commission was to create the *missionary* office, and to perpetuate it until the gospel should have been preached to every creature." p. 6. Ministers in the order of nature and of time, are before churches. The missionary work has thus wrought a complete emancipation of our Congregational brethren, from a portion at least of their swaddling clothes.

The Presbyterians who came to the middle states were

scarcely less strict in their notions on this subject, than the Independents of New England. They had larger ideas of the church, and a higher view of the ministry, but they still thought that a theory elaborated in a thickly settled country, could be transferred bodily to this new world. Because Scottish law and English parliaments forbad ordinations *sine titulo*, they thought they must be wrong in themselves, except at least under very peculiar circumstances. But when they found themselves in a country where, instead of every square foot of land belonging by law to some parish, hundreds of square miles contained only here and there a Christian family, they were forced to have more ministers than organized churches. Still they could not entirely shake off the prejudices of education, and therefore as our early records show, the Presbyteries were constantly coming with the humble request to the Synod, for permission to ordain A. B. or C. D. *sine titulo*. This doctrine is however as thoroughly obsolete as the dress of our forefathers. As a matter of fact the churches do not believe it, and they do not practice upon it. They have outgrown it. Transplanted into a larger sphere and awakened to a sense of her original vocation to preach the gospel to every creature, the church feels that she has need of men to gather churches as well as to supply them, of men to exercise on all occasions, and to every willing people, and not to one congregation only, the gifts of a διδασκαλος. She has turned from the laws of European nations, made to protect bishops and rectors in the undisturbed possession of their livings, to the New Testament. There she has found no such trammels as to the exercise of her right to ordain—and somewhat to her surprise perhaps, has discovered that every minister mentioned in the scripture was ordained *sine titulo*; in other words, that there is among all the preachers named in the New Testament, scarcely one who was pastor of a particular congregation. The church breathes rather more freely here than she did in the crowded countries of the old world. It will be labour thrown away to attempt to bring her again into bondage. This is one good service done the church by the missionary work foreign and domestic.

A second benefit to be expected from the same source is the gradual banishment of high-churchism, and the consequent promotion of Catholic unity. By high-churchism we mean the

disposition to attribute undue importance to the external organization of the church; the desire to make everything relating thereto a matter of divine right; and to insist that no society, however orthodox and pure, can be a church unless organized in one particular form. This disposition has deep root in human nature. The external and visible is ever too apt to overshadow the spiritual. It is not therefore only in Romanists and Prelatists, but even in Presbyterians and Independents we see manifestations of this spirit. Things are made obligatory, which God has left indifferent. Points are regarded as essential which are either unimportant or injurious. This spirit perverts the very nature of religion. It subjects the conscience to human authority. It alienates those who ought to be united, and is the cause of almost all the schism which afflicts, disgraces and impedes the church.

We as presbyterians of course believe that the essential principles of our system are laid down in scripture; that there is no office *jure divino* superior to that of presbyters; that the people have a right by their representatives to take part in the government of the church, and that the whole church is one, and hence a part is responsible to a larger portion, or to the whole. But we neither believe that any one mode of organization is essential to the being of the church, nor that the details of any system of church polity are laid down in scripture as universally obligatory. The idea that the church has no discretion in such matters, no liberty to adapt herself to her varying circumstances, is derived, in no small measure, from pressing unduly the analogy between the old dispensation and the new. Because everything was prescribed to the Hebrew church, it is inferred that there must be an express divine warrant for every arrangement adopted in the Christian church. Thus also it argued that because there was a priesthood then, there must be a priesthood now; because the church and state were united then, they must be united now. The old economy was a visible theocracy, and therefore the new dispensation must be the same. Strange to say, this was the great argument and the great mistake, alike of Papists and Puritans, of the persecuting Dominicans and the intolerant Covenanters. There is nothing to favour this doctrine. The old dispensation was designed for one people,

for one very limited country, for a specific object and for a limited time. Most of its institutions also were typical, and therefore of necessity fixed. The institutions of the Christian church are not prophetic, neither are they limited to one people. They are designed for all nations, for all ages and for every part of the globe. It is inconceivable that any one outward form of the church can be suited for all these different circumstances. We can readily believe that one style of building and one mode of dress might suit all parts of Palestine, but who can believe that God would prescribe the same garments for the Arabs and the Laplanders. It is therefore a priori in the highest degree improbable that God ever intended to deny to his church all discretion as to the details of her organization. When we open the New Testament, the first thing that strikes the attention of the reader is, its comparative silence on this subject. It is truth, repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; it is the way of reconciliation with God and restoration to the divine image, which are the prominent, overshadowing subjects there presented. Prelatists meet this difficulty by acknowledging the fact, but appealing to tradition as of equal authority with the scriptures. Those Protestants who adopt the *jus divinum* principle, are obliged to substitute conjectures as to what was done, in place of positive commands as to what we should do. The fact that God has not commanded Christians to adopt any one mode of organization, is proof enough that he intended to leave his people free, within certain prescribed limits, to adapt their church polity to their circumstances.

This is the conclusion to which the work of missions is forcing all denominations of Christians. This Report avows that it is found impracticable to transfer bodily to heathen countries, any of the forms of church organization adopted in Christian lands. With regard to religious teachers the committee uses the following language: "Considering the weakness and waywardness so generally found in men just emerging from heathenism, native pastors must for a time, and in certain respects, be practically subordinate to the missionaries, by whom their churches were formed, and through whom, it may be, they are themselves partially supported. . . . Should a practical parity, in all respects, be insisted on between the missionaries

and the native pastors, in the early periods when every thing is in a forming state, it is not seen how the native ministry can be trained to system and order, and enabled to stand alone, or even to stand at all. As with ungoverned children, self-sufficiency impatience of restraint, jealousy and other hurtful passions will be developed. The native pastors themselves are, for a season but babes in Christ, children in experience, knowledge and character. And hence missionaries, who entertain the idea that ordination must have the effect to place the native pastors at once on a perfect equality with themselves, are often backward in intrusting the responsibilities of the pastoral office to natives." p. 7. "It must be obvious that the view just taken of this subject involves no danger to the future parity of the native ministry, considered in their relation to each other, for, in the nature of things, the missionary office is scarcely more successive and communicable to native pastors than the apostolic office to evangelists." p. 8.

This appears to us perfectly reasonable and scriptural. No one would think of instituting a democracy among recently emancipated slaves, especially where they formed a majority of the community. It is not inconsistent with our republicanism that we keep the Indian tribes on our borders in a state of pupilage, or for a time appoint the governors and judges of our territories. It is a plain scriptural principle that superiority should be acknowledged and respected. Parents are superior to their immature children, and therefore it is the will of God that children should obey their parents. The inspired apostles were superior to all other ministers, and therefore they had authority over the whole church. The Romish theory on this subject is right enough, it is only false in fact. That theory is, that the bishops are apostles, and therefore have a right to govern the church. We admit that if they were apostles, that is inspired and infallible men, they would indeed have a right to rule, and that to resist them would be disobedience to God. But as they are no more inspired than other men, and are often in all respects the inferiors of their brethren, to claim for them a divine right to rule, becomes an unscriptural and most hurtful usurpation. It is not the mere transient inequalities as to age and capacity, such as exist among men born and educated under the same circumstances, that can lay any adequate foundation for offi-

cial subordination. It must be of such a nature as in the cases referred to, as creates a real incapacity on the one side to share in the duties and responsibilities of the other side. That such a disparity does exist between European and American missionaries and their heathen converts, cannot be denied. Such converts, however, must be employed as religious teachers, both because the field is far too large for the missionaries to cultivate alone, and because in this way only can a native ministry be trained up. Being however children in comparison to the missionaries, they must be treated as such. They are in such a sense inferior that they must be subordinate. The providence of God has already forced the missionaries, especially in the Sandwich Islands, to act upon this principle. There a single missionary has under his care a church with four or five thousand communicants. This supposes a congregation of from ten to fifteen thousand persons. It is impossible that the pastor can adequately minister to such a multitude. He must have helpers. Those assistants must be taken from among the native converts. The pastor selects them, assigns them their district or sphere of labour, tells them what they must do, superintends their instructions, and advances them from one kind of duty to a higher as they increase in capacity. Whatever names may be given to these assistants, it would be hard to find anything on scriptural grounds to object to such an arrangement.

As to the organization of mission churches, the Report before us says: "When the time comes for organizing native converts into churches, the missionaries, acting in behalf of these children in knowledge and in the power of self-organization and government, cannot properly be restrained, by foreign interference, from conforming the organization to what *they* regard as the apostolical usage in similar cases, having respect, of course to those necessary limitations already mentioned."* p. 31. "The result

* Reference is here made to pp. 12, 13 of the Report, where it is said the missionary comes under certain well understood pledges. "1. As to *his manner of life*; which is to be one of exemplary piety and devotion to his work. 2. As to *his teaching*; which must be conformed to the evangelical doctrines generally received by the churches, and set forth in their well known Confessions of Faith. 3. As to *ecclesiastical usages*; to which he must conform substantially as they prevail among the churches operating through the Board. He must hold to a clerical parity among the brethren of the mission. He must hold to the validity of infant baptism. He must admit only such to the Lord's Supper, as give credible evidence of faith in Christ. So far as his relation to the Board and his stand-

may be a much simpler organization for the mission churches, than is found in lands that have long sat under the light and influences of the gospel. Indeed, experience has clearly shown, that it is not well to attempt the transfer of religious denominations of Christendom, full-grown and with all their peculiarities, into heathen lands, at least until the new-born churches shall have had time to acquire a good degree of discriminative and self-governing power. The experience acquired in lands long Christian, partially fails us when we go into heathen countries. We need to gain a new experience, and to revise many of our principles and usages; and for this purpose to go prayerfully to the New Testament." p. 31.

"The religious liberty which we ourselves enjoy, is equally the birth-right of Christian converts in every part of the heathen world, on coming into the spiritual kingdom of Jesus Christ, which they may claim as soon as they are prepared for it; just as American freedom is the birth-right of our own children. The right of our children is not infringed by that dependence and control which they need during their infancy and childhood. It is even their right to claim, that the parent shall thus act for them in the early stages of their existence. But the wise parent will always form the principles and habits of his child, with reference to the time when the right of self-control must be fully exercised and yielded. In like manner the missionary must needs give form, at the outset, to the constitution and habits of mission churches, and for a time he must virtually govern them, But he will do this with a constant regard to a coming period, when those churches must and will act independently." p. 32.

Experience then has led the authors of this Report to recognise the following principles. 1. That a call from a church is not necessary to a call to the ministry; or, that ministers may properly be ordained *sine titulo*; or, that the office of an evangelist is not obsolete. 2. That such evangelists have all the rights and prerogatives belonging to the ministerial office. They are true office-bearers in the church of God. 3. That they may exercise a wide discretion as to the mode in which they organize churches gathered from among the heathen. 4. That mission

ing in the mission are concerned, he is of course not pledged to conform his proceedings to any other book of discipline than the New Testament."

churches have all the rights which belong to other Christian churches, though for a time they may properly be retained in a state of pupillage.

These principles must commend themselves to every candid reader. Regeneration does not convert an African into an European, or a Hindoo into an American. The heathen among whom our missionaries labour are far behind the Jews, Greeks and Romans to whom the apostles preached. As the church is to be established among all sorts of men, Hottentots, Hindoos, Sandwich Islanders, Indians, Greeks and Barbarians, wise and unwise, it must have liberty to adapt itself to these diverse circumstances. To transfer congregationalism to a heathen country, would be destructive, and has been found impossible. This fact should teach our eastern brethren that their system is not *jure divino* for all Christians, and should moderate the tone of assumption, which in some parts of the country, has begun to prevail on this subject. We do not pretend that Scotch Presbyterianism can be transferred bodily to our infant missionary churches. But we are disposed to make this claim in behalf of the genuine principles of continental and American presbyterianism. They have an elasticity which admits of their being suited to every change of circumstances. It is no violation of those principles to have preaching and teaching elders, subordinate to the pastor, as in the French churches; nor where suitable elders are scarce, to have several churches under one session or consistory as in various parts of Europe. We believe that God has mercifully left his people at liberty, within certain general principles laid down in his word, to modify their church polity as his providence may render expedient, and yet under all these forms to remain faithful to the radical principles of presbyterianism. It is not our purpose, however, to glorify presbyterianism; on the contrary we wish to express our sympathy with the Catholic spirit of this Report, and to show how much against the providence as well as the word of God, is the exclusive high-church principle, which would transfer to the Christian church all the trammels, which, for wise reasons, were imposed on the church before the advent.

The second subject considered by the committee is the responsibility of missionaries.

What security have the churches at home for the fidelity of the men sent to plant the gospel among the heathen? The answer given to this question is—1. The care taken in the selection of the men. 2. The definite and well-understood engagements into which the missionary enters. 3. His claim to support like that of a pastor, depends on his fulfilling his engagements. 4. The Board have a right to enforce this fidelity, not by ecclesiastical censures, but by dissolving the connexion of the missionary with itself and with the mission. 5. The mutual watch and care of the missionaries over each other, and the direct influence of truth on their minds and hearts. 6. The influence of public sentiment at home. The missionaries know that in a peculiar manner the eyes of the church are fixed upon them, and that any failure on their part must be attended with special disgrace. To all this is to be added, if not included under number five, the responsibility of the missionary to the ecclesiastical body at home to which he may belong. These to say the least, are as secure pledges for the faithful discharge of their duties as can be given by ministers in this country. Experience shows this to be the case. They have their infirmities and their difficulties; but it is matter of devout thankfulness to God, that American missionaries have been an honour and blessing to their country, and sustain a character in all respects equal to any similar body of men in the foreign field.

The rights and responsibilities of the Board in relation to missionaries and mission churches, is the third topic discussed.

This is much the most difficult and delicate division of the whole subject. The principles advocated in this Report are the following. 1. The Board has no ecclesiastical control, properly speaking, either over the missionaries or their churches. It can neither depose nor excommunicate, nor in any way effect the ecclesiastical standing of those under its care. pp. 13, 22. 2. It has the right to enforce fidelity on the part of the missionaries to their engagements. Those engagements include among other particulars, *a.* Exemplary Christian conduct. *b.* Correct religious teaching. *c.* Conformity to established ecclesiastical usages. *d.* Proper diligence in the discharge of their duties. pp. 12, 13, 21, 38. 3. The rule by which the Board purpose to judge of the religious teaching of their missionaries is, “the evangelical

doctrines generally received by the churches, and set forth in their well-known Confessions of Faith." p. 13. "Many things," it is said, "which at first, it might seem desirable for the Board to do, are found on a nearer view, to lie entirely beyond its jurisdiction; so that to attempt them would be useless, nay, a ruinous usurpation. Nor is the Board at liberty to withdraw its confidence from missionaries, because of such differences of opinion among them, as are generally found and freely tolerated in presbyteries, councils, associations, and other bodies here at home." p. 17. The standard of judgment as to matters of polity is, "the ecclesiastical usages" which "prevail among the churches operating through the Board." "While the Board may not establish new principles in matters purely ecclesiastical, it may enforce the observance of such as are generally acknowledged by the churches, and were understood to be acknowledged by the missionaries when sent to their fields." p. 13. 4. The Board, is therefore, "responsible *directly*, in the manner which has been described, for the teaching of the missionaries." p. 38. 5. The Board is not responsible *directly* for the character of the mission churches. If there be evils, even scandalous wickedness in those churches, they can be reached only through the missionaries. p. 39. When evils exist however in the mission churches the committee may and must inquire whether the missionaries are doing their duty.

This we believe to be a correct statement of the views of the committee in relation to their authority and responsibility in reference to the missionaries and the mission churches. From this it appears that the committee claim for the Board the right not only to enforce the fidelity and diligence of those under its care, as missionaries, but their correct teaching and discipline, as ministers. It is assumed that the Board has the right, in all cases, to judge of that correctness. They can inflict no ecclesiastical censure, but they can dissolve the connection between the missionary and the mission for error in doctrine, or discipline.

We of course do not controvert all the positions above quoted from the Report. Nor do we deny that the Board, under peculiar circumstances, may rightfully exercise all the powers here claimed in its behalf. The above view of the subject, however, involves, in our judgment, an important misapprehension of the relation of the Board both to the churches at home, and to the mission-

aries and churches abroad. The Board is simply the agent, and not the plenipotentiary of the church. It does not stand in the place of the churches, nor is it invested with all the oversight and control over the missionaries, which the church may properly exercise. It stands related to those whom it sends out, as missionaries, and not as ministers. Every such messenger to the heathen sustains a twofold relation, the one as a missionary to the Board, the other as a minister to his ecclesiastical superiors or associates. To the former, he is responsible for his conduct as a missionary; he must go where he is sent; stay where he is required to remain; perform that part of the missionary work which may be assigned to him, &c., &c. To the latter, he is responsible for his doctrines and ministerial conduct. Where a missionary stands isolated, or has no ecclesiastical supervisors, or none who can act as such, then as a matter of necessity, the consideration of his doctrine and acts of discipline, falls under the cognizance of the Board; not however as a part of their appropriate function, but on the same principle that in cases of emergency, every citizen, and not merely the police, is bound to enforce the law of the land.

The case of a missionary is analogous to that of an officer of the army. Every such officer bears a twofold relation; the one to his military superiors, the other to the civil authorities. As an officer, he is to be judged by the articles of war; as a citizen, by the laws of the land. For the Secretary at War, or commanding general, to take into his hands the administration of the civil law, is equivalent to the proclamation of martial law. In like manner for the Board of Missions to undertake to judge of matters of doctrine and discipline, would be like putting the whole missionary world in a state of siege.

If the Board is the agent of the churches for the conduct of missions, it is clear, 1. That it has the right to select and send forth missionaries, to determine their location, to superintend and direct their labours, to enforce fidelity and diligence, and in general to do whatever is requisite for the successful prosecution of their work, which is not otherwise provided for. 2. That the Board has the *power* to discard any missionary at pleasure, i. e., for any reason that to them may seem sufficient. It may be incompetency, indolence, ill-temper, or any other cause.

3. The only question is, what are the reasons which *justify* an exercise of that power? It is evident that those reasons may be perfectly adequate; or they may be insufficient; or they may be such as involve a breach of trust on the part of the Board toward the churches. If, for example, they should discard a missionary because he was a Calvinist or Paedo-baptist, that would clearly be a breach of faith with those churches for whom they act and from whom they derive their funds. 4. The points on which we think it important to insist are these: First, that no doctrine or mode of teaching can be an adequate ground for discarding any missionary, which doctrine or mode of teaching is sanctioned by the churches operating through the Board; and that no mode of church organization, or condition of church membership, can be a justifiable reason for withholding aid and fellowship from a mission church, which mode of organization and condition of church membership, is approved by those churches. And secondly, that the question whether a given doctrine is consistent with the faith of those churches, or a given mode of organization, or condition of church membership is compatible with their discipline, is one for those denominations and not for the Board to decide. That is, the Board cannot go behind the decisions of those churches, and pronounce that to be inconsistent with their doctrines, which they say is consistent, or that to be incompatible with their discipline, which they say is conformable to it.

It is hardly to be presumed that the Prudential Committee would dissent from either of these propositions as thus stated. And yet they are very different from the principles of their report, and lead to widely different practical results. The principal points of difference are these two. *First.* The Report assumes that the Board is directly responsible for the teaching of the missionaries, and of course have the right to superintend and direct it. Hence the committee call up the missionaries and interrogate them, Do you think so and so? Do you teach thus and thus? According to our view this responsibility does not rest upon the committee (unless as a derelict) but upon the ecclesiastical body, presbytery, classis, or association to which the missionary belongs. *Second.* The Report, as a necessary consequence of the assumed responsibility on the part of the Board

for the teaching of the missionaries, claims for it the right of judging of that teaching; of deciding whether it is consistent with the generally received doctrines of the churches; and of matters of church polity and discipline, whether they are consistent or otherwise with established ecclesiastical usage. We on the other hand, must deny to the Board any such right, (except as before said in the absence of the legitimate judges of such matters). The right of judging must rest where the responsibility is.

That our view of this important subject is the correct one, we think will appear from the following considerations. 1. The Board is not an ecclesiastical body. It disclaims all ecclesiastical authority. But to sit in judgment on the orthodoxy of ministers, to determine whether their doctrines are consistent with "the well-known Confession of Faith," or their principles of polity and discipline, with established ecclesiastical usage, is one of the very highest and most difficult duties of an ecclesiastical tribunal. It is, from the nature of the case, ecclesiastical control in the truest and highest sense of the term. It is of no account to say that the Board cannot affect the ecclesiastical standing or privileges of those whom it judges. The nature of the cause depends on the matter tried, and not on the character of the penalty. Deposition and excommunication are rare ecclesiastical inflictions. Admonition and other milder censures are much more frequent. That the effect of an unfavourable decision by the Board is disgrace, the loss of standing and the loss of support, instead of temporary suspension from church privileges, does not alter the case. If the judgment be rendered for error in doctrine, it is an ecclesiastical judgment, whatever may be the nature of the penalty. In England, the courts having jurisdiction over clergymen, for clerical offences, whether the Court of Arches or the Privy Council, are courts of ecclesiastical control, even though the penalty they impose be fine or loss of stipend. The report says: "The question assumes a plain business form—whether there is an actual departure from the basis, on which the missionary appointment was made, and what effect it has exerted on the peace and usefulness of the mission, and on the operations of the Board." (p. 22.) This is not one whit a plainer question, nor one whit more a business matter, than a trial for heresy before a presbytery. In this latter case, the simple question is, "whether there is an actual

departure from the basis on which" the man was received into the presbytery. If the latter is an ecclesiastical question so is the former. They are both questions relating to the orthodoxy of ministers. And the body authorized to sit in judgment on that question, is vested with ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The right therefore to judge of such matters does not belong to the Board, for by common consent they have no ecclesiastical control.

2. This authority to judge in matters of doctrine does not belong to the Board. It was never committed to them by any power, human or divine. It does not inhere in them in virtue of their constitution, nor has it been delegated to them by the churches.

3. It is an authority which the Board is not competent to exercise. The Board itself meets but once in the year, and that only for a few days. Its authority is really in the hands of the Prudential Committee. Such a committee, however, is evidently not a competent tribunal to sit in judgment on the ministerial character, the orthodoxy or heterodoxy, of hundreds of missionaries in all parts of the world. They are, in many cases laymen, and have not the competent knowledge. Lawyers would not like to see clergymen set to administer the laws of the land. And, without disrespect, it may be said, that if there is anything from which ministers and the church need pray to be delivered, it is from being subject to civil judges, in ecclesiastical matters. Judge Roger's decision has given a wholesome lesson on that subject to old school Presbyterians, and the decision of Judge Gibson, we hope, has been equally beneficial to our new school brethren. Besides the incompetency arising from want of training, any such body, as the Prudential Committee, is too remote from the person to be tried. They cannot adequately examine into any such case, unless it happens to be one of the most open and notorious character. They cannot however calculate upon always having cases of that kind. They may be called upon to determine whether a given doctrine is not Arminian or Pelagian, and a real denial of the well known creed of the churches. Besides all this they have no promise of divine guidance in this matter.

4. The power in question is both onerous and dangerous. One would think the Prudential Committee had work enough on their hands, in superintending so many missions in every

part of the world, with all their complicated concerns, without assuming the additional burden of directing the teaching, and judging the orthodoxy of some hundreds of missionaries. We doubt not the committee would rejoice to see themselves exempted from all responsibility on that subject. It is besides rather incongruous with our Protestant and especially our American ideas, that five or six men in Boston or New York, should have the power to determine what doctrines shall, and what shall not be taught in Europe, Asia, Africa and America; and to decide whether this or that opinion is consistent with the standards of evangelical churches. How much controversy have we had on that very point in all parts of the country. How earnestly has it been debated in New England itself. How decided were such men as Cornelius and Nettleton that certain doctrines whose advocates were neither few nor inconsiderable, ought not to be tolerated in our churches at home or abroad. Is the Prudential Committee prepared to decide all these litigated points? They must of necessity either exercise an intolerable power, or they must in a great measure let things take their course. Generally they would pursue the latter method, and every now and then the former. But the churches never can long recognise a power at war with all our ecclesiastical institutions. It would be very much like the republicanism which they have in Paris under General Cavaignac.

5. It is altogether unnecessary that the power to inspect the teaching of the missionaries and to judge of their doctrines, should be lodged in the hands either of the Board or of the Prudential Committee. It is far more safe and effective, if lodged elsewhere. The committee do not receive a missionary in the first instance, on the ground of any personal knowledge of his orthodoxy. They do not subject him to any theological examination. They take his orthodoxy for granted on the authority of the presbytery or the council that ordained him. They may refuse to receive him for ill-health, ignorance, un-amiableness, or other reasons of like nature, but they could not refuse his services because he held any opinion which the church to which he belongs, and the body which ordained him, pronounce to be sound. In the first instance then, the committee are relieved of the responsibility of judging of matters of doctrine, and disclaim all right to review the decisions of com-

petent church courts. When the missionary enters upon his field, he retains his ecclesiastical connexion whatever it was. He remains a minister of the Dutch, of the Presbyterian, or of the Congregational church or denomination. In all ordinary cases, three, six, or more ministers belong to one station. If they are Presbyterians they form a Presbytery, if Congregationalists, an Association. There is just the same oversight over the orthodoxy of a member of the Choctaw Presbytery of Indian, as of a member of the Presbytery of New York. There is just as much security for the correct teaching of a Congregational minister in Ceylon, as for a similar minister in Connecticut. In all such cases the responsibility rests with the ministerial associates of the missionary. It is the doctrine of all the churches operating through the Board, that a minister is subject to his brethren in the Lord. That subjection is neither thrown off nor transferred when he becomes a missionary. If no man or committee is entitled to question a member of the Presbytery of New York, or of the Association of East Windsor, about his doctrines, no man or committee can question the members of a presbytery or association in a foreign land.

Placing the responsibility for the teaching of the missionaries, and the right to judge concerning it on their ministerial associates, has, it seems to us, every thing in its favour. It is according to principle. It is what all churches do in this country, and what they all say ought to be done. It is one of the most valuable rights of the ministry. It is to them what trial by jury is in the state. It is far more safe and effective as a method of control. It relieves the committee of a burdensome, invidious and most dangerous prerogative. And finally it is right, and the other wrong.

It has already been admitted, that where a missionary is perfectly isolated, where he has no ministerial associates, then from the necessity of the case, his responsibility is to the committee. But these are rare cases, and ought not to be permitted to occur.

6. Operating on the principle here advocated, would free the committee from a great deal of embarrassment. The Congregational, Dutch Reformed, and a large part of the Presbyterian churches make the American Board their agent for conducting foreign missions. Those denominations have severally their standards of doctrine, and each its own method of deter-

mining what is and what is not consistent with its faith and discipline. Let them decide such matters. So long as a minister is *rectus in ecclesia* with the Dutch or the Presbyterians, the committee are free from all responsibility as to his doctrine. So long as those churches allow of a certain mode of church organization, or condition of church membership, the committee have nothing to say in the matter. If the venerable Mr. Kingsbury stands well in his own presbytery, the five or six gentlemen in Boston composing the Prudential Committee, may well rest satisfied with his doctrines. If father Spaulding, in Ceylon, has the confidence of all his ministerial associates, the churches in this country will not be suspicious of his orthodoxy. If the Dutch Reformed or Presbyterians allow those who drink wine or hold slaves to come to the Lord's table, the blame, if there be any, rests with them. How can the committee help it? Will they withhold the money contributed by those denominations from churches who do exactly what they are allowed to do by their ecclesiastical superiors? The committee themselves say they cannot withdraw their confidence from any missionary for any opinion tolerated by the churches at home. (p. 17.) Then why not let the churches decide whether a doctrine or usage is tolerated in fact, and ought to be so. This is all we contend for, viz. that it rests with the churches, i. e., with the regular ecclesiastical authorities, to judge whether the doctrines and discipline of the missionaries and their churches are to be tolerated or not. We can hardly think of a case where this principle would not apply. In all the large missions of the Board, there are ministers and church members enough to constitute as trustworthy a tribunal as can be formed at home. If those ministers form a presbytery or classis, there is an appeal from their decision to the Synod or General Assembly. If they form an association or council, that is the highest tribunal known to the Congregational churches. If a mission, presbytery or association become decidedly heretical, they are to be treated precisely as such bodies would be treated at home. But the question of heresy is one for the churches and not for the committee to decide. The New School General Assembly allow slaveholders to come to the Lord's table. Shall the committee, agents of the New School Presbyterians, refuse to sustain such churches, or shall they throw the responsibility on the denominations to which

the churches belong? We think the latter is the only course consistent with right principles, or compatible with the harmonious action of the numerous patrons of the Board.

Much therefore as we admire this Report in many of its features, and greatly as we respect the source whence it proceeds, we cannot but believe that the committee have misconceived the relation in which the Board stands, as well to the churches at home, as to the missionaries abroad. The Board is not the plenipotentiary of the churches, to secure the orthodoxy of missionaries or the purity of mission-churches. It is an agent for employing such missionaries and planting such churches abroad, as the churches at home approve. The missionaries are responsible to the Board for their fidelity and diligence as missionaries, but for their doctrines and discipline as ministers, they are responsible to the denominational churches to which they belong, which churches are represented by the ministerial associates with whom the missionaries are connected.

We have not said a word against the organization of the Board. We would not for any consideration lisp a syllable that could in any way do them harm. We most unfeignedly rejoice in their great success and usefulness. We conceive we are doing them a friendly act in publishing this review. It is right to discuss, with respect and kind feeling, a question in which all churches, and the Presbyterian especially, are deeply concerned. We believe it is perfectly easy for the American Board so to conduct their operations, as not to come into collision with the rights of the churches. We believe, moreover, that any departure from that way will be found to be, in the language of this Report, "a ruinous usurpation."

That the misconception of the true relation of the Board to the church and the missionaries, to which we have referred, is a very serious matter, is evident from the letter of the Rev. Mr. Treat to the Cherokee and Choctaw missions. In the existing state of the church and of the country, we cannot regard the adoption of that letter by the Prudential Committee and its publication, as anything short of a national calamity. The elements of strife and disunion are already so numerous and powerful, that the accession of a body, among the most influential in the whole land, to the side of separation, must be regarded as a most

serious event. Should that letter be ultimately sanctioned by the Board, as it has already been by the Prudential Committee, the consequences must be disastrous. As soon as the letter was read, its true character was apparent. The abolitionists at once said, We ask nothing more; that is our creed. One of those abolitionists since his return home has published a manifesto, giving an account of his visit to Boston, of his fidelity to his principles, and of the action of the Board. In that publication, he says, "While slavery has a tolerated existence in churches planted and watered by those Boards, (of Foreign and Domestic Missions,) it will be impossible to bring American Christianity into that open and honest antagonism with slavery, which is necessary for its destruction." Mr. Secretary Treat has done what was promised a year ago, "to the entire satisfaction of the most decided abolitionists of Boston and vicinity, and to my own." "If," says he, "the missionaries obey (the instructions of the committee) they are abolitionists. If they disobey, they will be dropped." "I am satisfied," he adds, "with the above action of the committee. Deference to opposing opinions has made them use much indirectness and verbosity, in stating their abolition creed, but it is an abolition creed nevertheless." After referring to the action of the Board in the premises, he says, "I see not what the Board could have done farther, unless they had resolved to cut off the missionaries without waiting to see whether they would obey the instructions of their committee or not. "Let us sustain the American Board in the anti-slavery race which it has so well begun. It will be deplorable indeed, if anti-slavery men do not supply any falling off of funds in pro-slavery sections of the country. Let us unitedly move the Home Missionary Society to plant the South with a slavery expelling gospel."*

Such is the interpretation put upon Mr. Treat's letter, by the abolitionists, and such, we are deeply grieved to say, appears to us its only true interpretation. The American Board of Commissioners is beyond doubt one of the noblest institutions of benevolence in the world. All Christians, yea, all mankind are interested in its proper management. A fearful responsibility rests on those who are at the helm of that noble ship. Under the guidance of strong and skillful hands, she has hith-

* Pres. Blanchard's Appeal, as given in the Christian Mirror, Portland, Nov. 30, 1848.

erto weathered every storm. She is now approaching, with all her canvass spread, the outer circle of the great whirlpool of fanaticism. The slightest deviation from the proper course, must bring her within the sweep of that fearful current. Those on board may, for a while, exult in her accelerated motion. But every practised eye can see, from the quivering of her sails, that such acceleration is due, not to the favouring breezes, but to the dreadful undertow, which must inevitably engulf every thing yielded to its power.

A brief analysis of this Letter will enable the reader to judge of its true character. There are three points as to which it expresses the views of the committee. 1. As to slavery and slaveholding. 2. As to the duty of the missionaries in relation to it. 3. The power and authority of the committee in the premises.

As to the first of these points the letter says: "Domestic slavery is at war with the rights of man, and opposed to the principles of the gospel." "It is an anti-christian system, and hence you have a right to deal with it accordingly. True, it is regulated by law, but it does not for that reason lose its moral relations. Suppose polygamy or intemperance were hedged in by legal enactments, could you not speak against them as crying evils?"

Though the system is always and everywhere sinful, yet slaveholding is not always a sin, provided, 1. The slaveholder enters the relation and continues in it, involuntarily; or, 2. That he holds the relation simply for the benefit of the slave. The slaveholder may indeed misjudge in not granting immediate emancipation. In that case, "the continuance of the relation is wrong, but the master may stand acquitted in the sight of God, because influenced solely by benevolent motives."

Christ and his apostles, though they did not expressly condemn slavery, said much which "bears strongly against it. If the single precept, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,' were carried out, it would cease at once in all its essential features." The directions given in the New Testament, as to the relative duties of masters and slaves, are said to be "consistent with the hypothesis that the apostles regarded the general relation as unnatural and sinful." "But why," asks the writer, "did not the apostles directly affirm the sinfulness of slavery? Why did they not insist on the

duty of emancipation? Simply because (if we may presume to give an opinion) they saw such a course, in their circumstances, would not soonest and best extirpate the evil."

As to the duty of missionaries in reference to slavery this letter teaches, 1. That they should denounce it. The only question is as to time and mode. This must be left to their discretion, but apostolic example does not justify continued silence. If after twenty-five years, that time has not yet come, in those Indian missions, the committee say, "We may well ask, When will it come?" 2. If a recent convert is connected with slavery, the missionary should inquire into his views of that institution. 3. If he proposes to come to the Lord's supper, he must "prove himself free from the guilt of that system, before he can make good his title to a place among the followers of Christ." He must show either, 1. That his "being the owner of slaves is involuntary on his part," or, 2. That "he retains the legal relation at their request and for their advantage," and that "he utterly repudiates the idea of holding property in his fellow-men." 3. The committee, "denying that there can be morally or scripturally, any right of property in any human being, unless it be for crime, and holding that the slave is always to be treated as a man, suppose that whatever is done in plain and obvious violation of these principles, may properly receive the notice of yourselves and your sessions." 4. The missionaries are to pursue such a course that the mission churches may soon be freed "from all participation in a system that is so contrary to the spirit of the gospel and so regardless of the rights of man." 5. They are to abstain from using slave labour. "It is with profound regret," the committee say, "that we have learned how many hired slaves are now in the service of the Choctaw mission. We readily acquit you of any plan or purpose to disregard our known wishes on the subject. We cheerfully accept the excuse you offer, namely, that the boarding schools established in 1843, in consequence of an arrangement made with the Choctaw government, in your view made such assistance necessary, and that you supposed the committee must have assented to its employment." "This engagement with the Choctaw government has some fifteen years to run, and yet we do not feel willing to be a party to the hiring of slaves for this long period. By so doing, as it seems to us, we

countenance and encourage the system. We make this species of labour more profitable to the owner ; at the same time that we put it into his power, if he will, to plead our example to justify or excuse the relation. In this state of things, it appears to be our duty to ask you first of all, to inquire once more into the supposed necessity of this practice, and to see if slave labour cannot in some way be dispensed with. And if you can discover no method by which a change can be effected, we submit for your consideration whether it be not desirable to request the Choctaw government to release us from our engagement in respect to the boarding schools. It is with pain that we present this alternative ; but such are our views of duty in the case, that we cannot suggest a different course."

This practical question as to the propriety of employing slave-labour, stands, in a measure, by itself. We would venture to remark respecting it, 1. That as it is properly a secular matter, connected immediately with the schools, which are the property and under the control of the committee, they may be entitled to use the strong language of authority, which is employed in this letter. 2. It is no doubt conceivable that to employ such labour may be very inexpedient. If any considerable number of Christians are offended by it, or if any are thereby led into sin, it may be well to abstain from it, on the same principle that Paul said he would eat no meat while the world stood, if meat made his brother to offend. 3. The reasons, however, assigned by the committee are to us very unsatisfactory. Those reasons are all founded on the assumption that slaveholding is sinful. Otherwise there could be no scruples of conscience in the case. The committee would not hesitate to allow the missionaries to set to those around them a Christian example as to the method of treating and instructing slaves, did they not regard the "relation itself as unnatural and sinful." The slaves often earnestly desire to be employed by the mission, their condition is thereby improved, their privileges increased, and they are thus brought into the way of religious instruction, and perhaps of salvation. Unless slaveholding is a sin, it is hard to see how the force of these considerations is to be resisted. 4. The committee urge that by allowing the mission to hire slaves, they sanction the system and put it into the power of the owner to plead their example to justify the relation. This is not the fair interpreta-

tion of their conduct. Nothing more than the recognition of a *de facto* relation is involved in employing slaves. No opinion is thereby expressed of the justice of the relation. When one government recognises another, it is only as *de facto* not as *de jure*. It would involve endless difficulty and doubt, if such recognition was understood to be a judgment as to the legitimate or equitable title of the government recognised. It is so also with matters of property. Does every man who buys land of the United States, thereby sanction the equity of all the treaties by which that land was acquired? The settlers in New Holland are not understood to pronounce judgment on the justice of the sentences by which the men they hire, are consigned to bondage? Those who employed, and those who redeemed the Christian captives in Algiers, did not sanction the piracy by which those captives were obtained? What would be thought of a father, who should allow his son to pine in hopeless bondage, refusing to pay his ransom, because by so doing he would admit the right of his master, and render piracy more profitable? If such conduct would be unnatural, to us it seems no less unnatural, that a Christian Board should refuse to hire slaves to their own advantage, refuse to bring them under the influence of the gospel, lest they should be understood to sanction slavery. 5. The principle on which the committee act in this matter cannot be consistently carried out. Every use we make of the products of slave labour, is an encouragement to slavery. If all men were to agree not to use anything in the production of which slaves have been employed, slavery must instantly cease. This is not done here at the North. We presume it is not done by the committee. It is not done by the missionaries. They doubtless consume the wheat, the beef, the corn which slaves have assisted in raising. It therefore seems very strange, that the committee should say, they will give up their schools rather than sanction slavery, when they will not give up the sugar for their coffee for the same reason.

The missionaries require a great deal of assistance in their domestic and farming operations. Free labour is very difficult to be obtained. The plan of sending out assistant missionaries, has been tried and failed. The use of slave labour has been sanctioned by the former officers of the Board. In 1825 the Prudential committee resolved, that they "did not see cause to

prohibit the practice." In 1836 they resolved to dispense altogether with slave labour, but on a representation having been made by the missionaries that they could not get on without it, "the matter was left to their Christian discretion." There the subject has been left until the present excitement has called it up, and so disturbed the conscience of the committee, that they are forced to submit the alternative to the missionaries to give up their schools, or do without slave labour. This we regard as a very perverted judgment. It is straining at a gnat, while swallowing a camel. It is being dreadfully troubled about the mote in our brother's eye, while unmindful of the beam that is in our own eye. The encouragement given to slavery by the missions in hiring a few slaves, much to their own benefit, is as nothing, compared with that afforded by the wholesale use of the products of slave labour, by the good people of Boston. We are sincerely sorry to say that this whole letter seems to us full of a mistaken self-righteous spirit; carping at trifles in laborious devoted men in the wilderness; while blind to tenfold greater evils of the same nature, which pass without rebuke in our pampered churches at home.

The doctrine then of this letter is that slavery is every where and at all times sinful. Christ condemned it, though not in words. The apostles abstained from denouncing it, only on motives of expediency. Slaveholding is excusable and consistent with church-membership only when involuntary, or when temporarily continued at the request of the slave and for his benefit. The missionaries are to inculcate these principles, and to pursue such a course as shall free the mission churches from all participation in the system. Even hiring slaves is to be abstained from, though the consequence be the disbanding the missionary schools. We have never understood that the avowed abolitionists go any farther than this. They inculcate these doctrines in plainer terms, and in a more straight-forward, clear-headed manner. They are more peremptory in their demands, and violent in their spirit. But as to all essential matters, their doctrines are those here presented.

The third point on which the committee touch, is their own authority in reference to this whole subject. They say, 1. "We do not claim any *direct** control over the churches which you

* The italics are not ours.

have gathered, nor shall we ever approach them in the language of authority or dictation." We can suppose a case "in which we might be constrained by the sacredness of the trust committed to us, to withhold that pecuniary aid it has given us, in past years, so much pleasure to afford." 2. "We do not wish *you*, either individually or collectively to bring any other influence to bear on those churches or the community in which you dwell, except such as belongs to the ministerial office." 3. "We do not design to infringe in the least, by what we shall say in this letter, upon your rights as ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ." That is, the committee does not claim what, even a presbytery or a bishop, would not think of assuming, the right of dictation in matters of discipline. Nor do they wish the missionaries to assume that power to the exclusion of their sessions, or to the infringement of the rights of the churches. Nor finally do they claim any authority over the missionaries themselves, inconsistent with their office as ministers. Their whole claim is that they have the right to withhold pecuniary aid from those churches, which do not conform their discipline to the views of the committee; and from those ministers who do not obey their instructions as to their manner of teaching. This is the precise doctrine of the Report, viz. that the Board are responsible for the teaching of the missionaries, and therefore have the right to examine into what that teaching is, and to direct what it should be; and to withdraw their patronage from missionaries and churches, who do not conform to their instructions. The missionaries have been led to take this view of the power claimed by the committee, and to regard themselves and their churches as entirely in the hands of the Board. If on account of our views on this subject, they say, "the Committee or Board can no longer sustain us, if they must withdraw from us their support, and so far as they are concerned, leave the Cherokee people without the preaching of the word of God, then wherever the responsibility belongs there let it rest. . . . We pray the committee to remember that if the patronage of the Board be withdrawn from us, it will not be for the violation, on our part, of any condition on which we were sent into the field; but in consequence of new conditions, with which we cannot in conscience comply." Again, "If support be withdrawn from us on account of views

which we have expressed in this communication, it will of necessity be, so far as the Board are concerned, an entire withholding of the word of God from the Cherokee people. For to withcall us on this ground, and to send others who would pursue an opposite course, would be manifestly preposterous and vain." There is no doubt, therefore, as to how the missionaries have been taught to view this matter. So also in the passage quoted above from Pres. Blanchard's appeal, it is said with approbation, "If the missionaries obey, they are abolitionists; if they disobey, they are dropped." The committee claim therefore, in this letter, as we understand them, and as they seem to be universally understood, the right to withhold pecuniary aid from missionaries and mission churches unless they become abolitionists.

1. Our first objection then to this letter, as may be inferred from what we have already said, is that it proceeds on a misapprehension of the true relation and powers of the Board. It assumes that the Board is responsible for the teaching of the missionaries, and therefore has the right to judge of it, and to direct it. This we have endeavoured to show is a mistake. The Board are the agents, and not the plenipotentiaries of the churches. The churches have never committed to them the right to judge, in their behalf, of Christian doctrine, or of deciding what is and what is not consistent with their several creeds. This is a high ecclesiastical function, which belongs only to ecclesiastical bodies. The Board cannot go behind the official judgment of the churches. If the Presbyterian church has pronounced a certain doctrine consistent with her standards, the Board cannot dismiss a Presbyterian missionary from their service, on account of holding or teaching that doctrine. Nor can they withhold their support from any mission church, under the care of a presbytery, for any cause which the Presbyterian church does not consider worthy of censure. If the members of the committee discover that the Presbyterian church holds doctrines, or tolerates usages, which they cannot with a good conscience help to sustain, the simple course is for them to resign. But if multitudes sympathize with them, then the fact is revealed that they and the Presbyterians can no longer unite in the missionary work. But it is clearly preposterous for the committee to profess to be agents of the Presbyterian church, (old or new), and yet refuse to be guided by the judgment of

that church. The New School General Assembly, as well as the old, has decided that such slaveholding as is tolerated in the mission churches of the Cherokees and Choctaws, is consistent with Christian character and fellowship. With what show of reason then can the Boston committee, the agents of these presbyterians, in disbursing presbyterian money, say it shall not be permitted? It is clear as day that so long as the Dutch, Presbyterian and Congregational churches unite in the work of missions, the Board has no right to withdraw their patronage from any man or church, on account of any doctrine or usage which those churches approve. And it is no less clear that the right to judge of the consistency or inconsistency of any doctrine or usage with the standards of those churches, rests not with the committee, but with the churches themselves. To deny either of these propositions, is to create a dictatorship at once. The effect of this misapprehension is clear throughout Mr. Treat's letter. The secretary summons before him ministers who are members of presbytery in good standing, interrogates them as to their opinions, their mode of teaching, and exercise of discipline. He lays down rules as to how that teaching is to be conducted, and the terms on which members are to be received into Presbyterian churches. He gives them to understand that the committee may "be constrained by the sacredness of the trust committed to them, to withhold that pecuniary aid it has given them, in past years, so much pleasure to afford."* His sole legitimate authority, in the matter, was to ask, "Brethren, does your church approve of such and such teaching? and does it sanction such and such conditions of church-membership?" If the answer to those questions is affirmative, the matter is ended. The committee may be grieved, or they may be glad. Their private opinions are not to be in the least consulted in such cases. As to manner, the letter is unexceptionable. It is couched in the blindest terms. It was evidently penned with the determination that no word should grate on the most delicate ear. Nevertheless, it is perfectly Archiepiscopal in its tone.

* That aid, however, is not given by the committee, but by the churches through the committee. A very important distinction. If given by the committee, it may be given at their discretion—but if given by the churches, it must be given according to their pleasure, i. e., to men and churches whom they approve.

It is written just as the "servant of servants" is wont to write ; or, to use a better illustration, as Paul wrote, when he said, "Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin that which is convenient ; yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such a one as Paul the aged." This is lovely and venerable from apostolic lips—but apostolic lips have long since been sealed in death. We do not in the least attribute the apostolic tone of this letter, to any thing in the personal feelings of its authors. We believe them to be good men, and as humble as the rest of us. It is due to their false apprehension of their position. They are not entrusted with the authority which they suppose belongs to them. So long as the ecclesiastical bodies, with which the missionaries and mission churches among the Cherokees and Choctaws are connected, are satisfied with their doctrine and discipline, the Prudential Committee have no more right to interfere in the matter than any other five gentlemen in Boston.

2. Our second objection to this letter is that it is inconsistent with the Special Report of the Prudential Committee. It agrees indeed with the Report in claiming the right to sit in judgment on the teaching of the missionaries, and to control it according to their own interpretation of the general creed of the churches. It differs, however, from it in another important principle. The Report says expressly, the Board is not "at liberty to withdraw its confidence from missionaries, because of such differences of opinion among them, as are generally found and freely tolerated in presbyteries, councils, associations and other bodies here at home." p. 17. This rule follows as a matter of course, from what is said on pp. 13, 14, as to the standard by which the Board proposes to judge of doctrine, viz. the articles of faith "generally received by the churches." It may enforce obedience in those things in which the churches are united, but not in those cases in which they are divided. This principle is on p. 14 expressly applied to slavery. "The admission of slaveholders into the apostolical churches" is said to be one of the points about which the churches differ. Hence "the Board," it is said, "may not undertake to decide, that this class of persons was certainly admitted to church-membership by the apostles, nor that they were excluded, in such a way as to have the effect on the missionaries of a statute, injunction, or scripture doctrine

in respect to the admission of such persons into churches now to be gathered in heathen nations where slavery is found." The committee, it is added, may reason, persuade, and remonstrate, but further, neither they nor the Board, are authorized to go. Now according to the interpretation, as far as we know, universally put upon this letter; according to what appears to us its necessary meaning, and according to the understanding of the missionaries themselves, this is precisely the question the committee undertake in this letter authoritatively to decide. It lays down the rule as to how slaveholders are to be dealt with, when they are to be received, and when rejected from the communion of the church. All this is done officially, and with authority, and with the intimation that the continuance of the connexion between the Indian churches and the Board, depends upon their acting agreeable to the instructions here given. If this be not the character of the letter it loses all its importance. If it is an unofficial letter of friendship, instead of a letter of instructions, why should it be so solemnly sanctioned by the committee, reported to the Board, and their decision respecting it looked to us as determining the ground the Board was hereafter to stand upon? It would be sad news for the abolitionists, but a great relief to the missionaries, and to the Christian public, to know that the Board renounces the right to forbid slave-holding in the mission churches on pain of losing their patronage. This, however, is not to be hoped for, if this letter expresses their views of their own authority. It expresses the sentiment of the committee on the whole subject of slavery, calls upon the missionaries to say whether they acquiesce in them, and are ready "to act in accordance with them." The committee, therefore, here undertake to decide a point disputed among the churches. It decides moreover in favour of the minority. It proposes a doctrine of church communion which no denominational church has been left to adopt. It was indignantly voted down by an overwhelming majority (hundreds to units) in the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland. It was rejected, after nearly three weeks debate, by the New School Assembly in Philadelphia. It is repudiated by the Dutch Reformed church, and by that branch of the Presbyterian church with which some of these mission churches are immediately connected. It is probably

rejected by four-fifths of all the educated converted men in the world. Yet this doctrine, in obedience to a comparative handful of clamorous fanatics, the official organs of one of the most influential benevolent institutions in the world, would force on the ministers and churches of Christ. It would be better for the committee to cut off their right hands, rather than cut off the Indian churches because they admit slaveholders to their communion. Not because of any pecuniary loss it may occasion, but because it cannot be done without a sacrifice of principle, without subjecting the church to public opinion, now violently this, and again violently that. We sincerely pray that the Board may be preserved from any such disastrous mistake.

3. Our third objection to this letter is, that it is pervaded by a false philosophy. This is no small evil. It is a recognised truth that the world is governed by ideas. The character of men is formed, their conduct determined, and their destiny decided, in no small degree, by definitions. It is the view which they take of the primary principles of moral and metaphysical truth, that governs their opinions and consequently their conduct. The false philosophy of this letter leads to wrong views of duty, and those wrong views of duty, to a course of measures which, if persisted in, must split the American Board to pieces, and, to the extent of its influence, facilitate first, the division of the American churches, and then the dissolution of the American Union.

The philosophy on which this communication is founded, is what is popularly called "the doctrine of expediency." It is that philosophy in which the words "right" and "wrong," lose their distinctive meaning, and become the mere synonymes of beneficial and injurious. It is a philosophy which makes the end sanctify the means, and teaches that an action may be externally wrong and internally right. This is the philosophy to which all the doctrines and directions of this letter owe their character. This, for example, is the origin of the distinction between "slavery and slaveholding;" between "the system and the persons implicated therein." The system is always sinful, but those who practice it may be innocent. "The continuance of the relation is wrong, but the master may stand acquitted in the sight of God, because he was influenced solely by benevolent motives. Just as the selling ardent spirits, in the days of our

common ignorance on the subject of temperance, was clearly wrong; and yet many good men, never imagining that they were acting contrary to the law of love, engaged in the traffic. The *external* character of an act is one thing; its *internal* character quite another thing. A man may conscientiously do that which is injurious in its tendency; as, on the other hand, he may, with a bad motive, do that which is innocent or beneficial in its tendency."

Such language necessarily supposes that right means beneficial, and wrong, injurious. No moral distinction is admitted, but only a difference as expedient or inexpedient. A thing being injurious may indeed be one reason why it would be wrong in any one voluntarily to do it, but to merge the distinction of right and wrong into that of expedient and inexpedient, subverts the foundation of morals and religion, and when logically carried out, leads to the greatest enormities. According to the doctrine of this letter, no matter what "the external character of an act" may be, it is innocent if done conscientiously or from benevolent motives. If this is so, then Paul was not to blame for persecuting the church, because he verily believed he was doing God service; he had no doubt that the interests of truth, of his nation, and of the world were involved in putting down what he regarded as an imposture. This doctrine exculpates all persecutors and inquisitors, the exterminators of the Waldenses and of the Peruvians, provided only they were conscientious, which was, as it regards many of them, no doubt the case. It is vain to argue this matter. No man can look the naked proposition in the face, that every thing is innocent to him who thinks it to be right. The very essence of the guilt of men, the very sum of their depravity is their thinking good evil and evil good. The Bible holds up to us coincidence of moral judgment with God as the ideal of perfection, and as the clearest evidence of alienation from him that we regard that to be right which he abhors. If an act may be externally wrong and internally right, then the assassination of Henry IV, from an earnest desire to rid the world of an evil, was right; and then the doctrine that the end sanctifies the means, must, in all its length and breadth, be admitted. The motive of an action is determined by the end in view. If that end be the good of society, the motive is benevolent, and no matter what the nature of the act, the

agent stands acquitted in the sight of God, because he is governed by benevolent motives. This is radically and lamentably false morality. No man can sin innocently. No man stands acquitted in the sight of God for doing what God forbids. If slaveholding is sinful, all slaveholders are sinners. If persecution is wicked, all persecutors are without excuse. If selling ardent spirits is wrong now, the good men who formerly engaged in the traffic sinned against God. The reason of this is plain. All moral truths contain their own evidence; evidence which no man can innocently reject. How preposterous would it be for men to talk of committing theft, murder, or drunkenness from benevolent motives. No man can screen himself at a human tribunal, much less at the bar of God, behind his motives. It is indeed a plain doctrine of the Bible, and a plain principle of morals, that some sins, by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others. But it remains true, nevertheless, that every sin deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life and in that which is to come. The crimes of the heathen committed in their blindness, do not lose their nature as sins, though it will be far more tolerable in the day of judgment for them, than for many Christians. That sins may be greatly aggravated by the circumstances under which they are committed, and especially by the light enjoyed by the transgressor, is very different from the doctrine which holds a man innocent who conscientiously commits sin, or which teaches that a thing may be externally wrong and internally right.

Another evidence of the false philosophy of this letter, is found in the manner in which it speaks of the conduct of our Lord and his apostles in relation to slavery. It represents them as abstaining from the denunciation of sin, from motives of expediency. God, however, hates and every where and at all times, denounces all sin. Why were idolatry and covetousness denounced? They were far more prevalent than slaveholding; they were more influential and more deeply rooted, and yet no considerations of expediency constrained the apostles to silence, regarding them. It is an impeachment of the integrity of any teacher of morality to say that he avoided all denunciation of theft, murder and adultery from motives of expediency. No one

can think, without a shudder, of Christ and the apostles giving directions to thieves and drunkards how to treat their associates or victims. This doctrine that men's conduct in reference to moral questions, may be regulated by expediency, overlooks all moral distinctions. With regard to things indifferent, expediency is a very proper guide—but no truth can be plainer than that all sin should be everywhere denounced, and immediately forsaken.

To the same false principle are to be referred all the directions which this letter gives to the missionaries. Slaveholding is sinful, but you need not say so. You may choose your time. You may wait for suitable occasions. You may do it indirectly, when it would not answer to do it plainly. That all this is wrong is obvious. No such directions could be given with regard to any other sin. It would not do to say to the missionaries, you may take your own time to denounce robbery and murder. You may do it indirectly, &c., &c. The public are not so entirely blinded by a false philosophy, as not to see this is wrong. And we cannot but hope it may be given to the Prudential Committee, to see that there is something amiss in their theory. Either slaveholding is not a sin, or this is not the way to treat it.

From this same doctrine of expediency, from the doctrine that a thing may be externally wrong and internally right, flows the inquisitorial treatment of slaveholding converts here recommended; this prying into their motives in owning slaves, to determine whether they are selfish or benevolent. Is this the course pursued with regard to lying and theft? Is the poor convert cross-questioned as to his motives in cheating and stealing? We trow not. And why not? Simply because every one knows that cheating and slaveholding belong to very different categories. Lying and theft are sinful in themselves, and it matters not with what motives they are committed. If slaveholding is sinful, there is no need to enquire into a man's motives in sinning.

4. Our fourth objection to this letter is its want of discrimination and clearness. The writer gives us no distinct idea of what it is he condemns. He condemns slavery, but he does not tell us what he means by it. He seems to speak of it as a system which keeps men in degradation, which denies to them

a just compensation for labour; which disregards their rights as husbands and parents; which forbids their instruction, and debars them from access to the word of God. He sees, as every one else sees, that a system which does all this, must be sinful. It is a system which ought not to be dallied with, or assaulted indirectly, but should be openly denounced, and immediately abandoned by every good man. But these things are not slavery. They do not enter into its definition. It may, and in many cases does exist without one of these circumstances. Slavery is involuntary servitude. And servitude is the obligation to serve. This is all that is essential to slavery. It supposes the right on the part of the master to the service of the slave, without his consent. In every country where slavery prevails there are two sets of laws relating to it. The one designed to enforce this right of the master, to render it profitable, and to perpetuate it. The other intended to protect the slave. These laws vary continually. They were far more unjust in the French West India Islands, than in the British, and more unjust in the British, than in the Spanish. Laws made by slaveholders and intended to enforce, and to render secure and profitable their right to the service of their slaves, are almost always more or less in conflict with the gospel. So is all class legislation of any kind. In regard to these laws, it is the business of the church, by her instructions and discipline, to enforce such as are good and such as are indifferent, and to denounce such as are wicked. If the Roman law gave the power of life and death to the master, he was none the less a murderer, in the sight of the church, if he maliciously put his slave to death. If American law gives the master the power of punishment, he is none the less guilty in the sight of the church, for every act of cruelty. If the law allows the master to keep back from his slaves a due recompence for their labour; to debar them access to the means of grace, and especially from the word of God; he is not the less accountable to the church for every violation of the law of justice and mercy. Human laws allow to parents and husbands a power which they may dreadfully abuse. Yet the possession of that power is not itself sinful.

What we complain of is, that this letter makes no discrimination between slavery and slave laws; between the possession of

a master's power and the abuse of that power. The relation itself is pronounced "unnatural and sinful," when all the arguments tend to prove not the relation, but the abuse of it to be wrong. Christ and his apostles evidently regarded the possession of despotic power, whether in the state or the family, a matter of indifference, i. e., neither right nor wrong in its own nature, but the becoming one or the other according to circumstances. It was therefore not despotism in the state, or slaveholding in the family, which they condemned, but the wrong use of the authority of the despot or the master.

There is the same confusion with regard to the word "property." The letter says the converted slaveholder must repudiate the idea of having a right of property in a human being. Everything done on the assumption of such a right, is declared to be a proper matter for discipline. But not one word is said to inform us what this right of property is. Abolitionists say it is the right to make a man a thing, or a brute. If this is what is meant, will any one venture to say that Christ and his apostles, from motives of expediency, failed to denounce so great a sin as that? Neither lying nor stealing could be one half so offensive to God, as such an insult and degradation put upon his own image. No slave laws, however atrocious, ever proceeded on the assumption that a slave was not a rational being, of the same nature with his master. If this is what the letter means by the right of property, it is a mere chimera. The only sense in which one man can have property in another, is in having a right to his services. In this sense the state has the right of property in her citizens, a right which she often presses further than the slaveholder can press his power, when she forces men into her armies and navies, and sends them to die by pestilence or the sword.

These are subjects which we have repeatedly discussed at length, in the pages of this journal. We have no desire to travel again over the same ground. We have said enough to show the lamentable consequences of not discriminating things that differ; of confounding things lawful or indifferent, with things in their own nature sinful. If the noble letters written by the Cherokee and Choctaw missionaries, failed to open the eyes of the committee to this distinction, we despair of being

able to do it. Those letters show that the missions are faithful in this whole matter; dealing with the subject just as the scriptures treat it, condemning all that is sinful, and requiring all that justice or love demand, abstaining only from pronouncing, contrary to the scripture, and contrary to the judgment of nine-tenths of the people of God in all ages, "the relation itself to be unnatural and sinful."

There are several perfectly distinct and intelligible views of this whole subject of slavery, and of the proper method of dealing with it. The first is, that it is a good and desirable institution; a state of the labouring population, which upon the whole is preferable to any other. Appropriate means ought therefore to be taken to perpetuate and extend it. As however slavery is founded on the inferiority of one class of society to another, it cannot continue to exist unless that inferiority be perpetuated. Consequently, according to this view, slaves ought to be debarred from the means of improvement, and kept in a condition of intellectual and social debasement. This is the fanatical proslavery doctrine. It has been repudiated by all the great men of the south in the earlier periods of our history, and is probably not held by one educated man in a hundred, perhaps not by one in a thousand, in our slaveholding states.

The second view is, that the relation is unnatural and sinful, and should therefore be immediately and universally renounced, just like any other sin, drunkenness, lying, or theft. This is clear-headed, and straight-forward abolitionism.

The third is the scriptural view. Slaveholding, according to this view, belongs to the class of things indifferent, of things neither forbidden nor commanded in the word of God, which are right or wrong, according to circumstances. It is like despotism in the state. A man may possess despotic power in the state, power giving him authority over the persons and property of his fellow men. The abuse of such power is a great sin. To employ it with the view of perpetuating it, by keeping those under its control in a state of ignorance or debasement, is one of the greatest acts of injustice that one man can commit towards his fellows. But if that power be used justly and benevolently, its possession is no sin, and the despot may be one of the greatest benefactors of his race. Despotism, however, is not a desirable form of government, no means therefore ought

to be employed to perpetuate it. It is adapted only to a low state of civilization, and must disappear as the mass of the people increase in intelligence, property and virtuous self-control. It is just so with slavery or domestic despotism. A man may be a slaveholder without any impeachment of his Christian character. The relation in which he stands to his slaves is not a sinful one. It is not forbidden in the word of God. It may be the most appropriate and natural relation in which the parties can stand to each other. Just as despotism in some circumstances is the very best form of government. But such slaveholder is bound to use his power as a Christian, just as a parent or husband is bound to use his authority; or a rich man his wealth. He must act in obedience to the gospel, which teaches that the labourer is worthy of his hire, and that a fair compensation must in all cases be made to him; which forbids the separation of those whom God has joined in marriage; which requires all appropriate means to be used for the intellectual and moral improvement of our fellow men, and especially that free access should be allowed them to the word of God, and to all the means of grace. This is the gospel method of dealing with slavery. If this method be adopted, the inferiority of the one class to the other, on which slavery is founded, will gradually disappear, and the whole system be peacefully and healthfully abolished. This is the way in which the gospel has already banished domestic slavery from a large part of the Christian world. There are some men who are so blind they cannot see, or so wicked they will not acknowledge, the difference between this view and first above mentioned.

An unsuccessful attempt is sometimes made, as in this letter of Mr. Treat's, to find some middle ground between abolitionism, and what we have ventured to designate as the scriptural view of this subject. The principles of the abolitionists are admitted, but their conclusions are denied or modified. The system is sinful, but those who practise it may be innocent. The relation is wrong, but it need not be immediately abandoned. Being sinful, it affords *prima facie* evidence that those who are concerned with it, are not Christians. Before they can be properly recognised as such, they must prove they are influenced by benevolent motives, in doing what is "unnatural and sinful."*

* Mr. Goodell, the prominent New York abolition editor, says, When you

In all we have now written, we have been influenced by the most friendly feelings towards the American Board. We believe it has been an incalculable blessing to this country, and to the heathen world. We regard the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom as deeply involved in its prosperity. We think all Christians are bound to pray for its success, to avoid everything that can injuriously affect it, and to promote its efficiency, as God may give them the ability and occasion. We believe that the misapprehension, which in our judgment, characterizes the Report of the Prudential Committee, is perfectly natural, and entirely consistent with the purest intentions on their part. We believe, further, that the correction of that misapprehension, and the adoption of the principles we have endeavoured to sustain in this review, so far from impeding their operations, would tend directly to disembarass and facilitate them. The committee say they are directly responsible for the teaching of the missionaries. They must, therefore, have the right to know what it is, to judge and to direct it. The consequence is, their conscience is always on the alert. The opinions of the few gentlemen in Boston as to what is, and what is not, the faith and discipline of the church, become the rule by which all missionaries are to conduct their teaching, subject indeed to the revision of the Board. Hence, if the missionaries teach that slavery is not in itself sinful, and that slaveholding is not *prima facie* evidence of an unconverted state, and the committee think otherwise, and that the churches agree with them, they are bound to require the missionaries to conform to their views. According to the other view of the matter, the committee are not directly responsible for the teaching of the missionaries. That responsibility rests on the ecclesiastical body to which they belong. To that body, therefore, and not to the Committee, belongs the right of inquiry, judgment and direction. Consequently, so long as the denomination, with which a missionary is connected, approves of any doctrine or rule of discipline, the committee cannot interfere. If, for example, missionaries connected with the Presbyterian or Dutch church, with the approbation of those churches, admit slaveholders to the

convince an Old School man of sin, he will forsake it. But when you have convinced a New School man that a thing is sinful, you have still to satisfy him that it is expedient to abandon it.

communion, the committee are relieved from all responsibility. On the other hand, if missionaries connected with the Congregationalists, with the approbation of those entitled to judge, hold and teach that slaveholders should not be received, the committee are bound to acquiesce, as to the mission churches under Congregational control. By the Board and the churches keeping thus, in their separate spheres, we see not why there need be any collision between them.

ART. II.—*The Work claiming to be the Constitutions of the Holy Apostles, including the Canons; Whiston's version, revised from the Greek; with a Prize Essay at the University of Bonn, upon their origin and contents; translated from the German, by Ira Chase, D.D. New York. D. Appleton & Co. 1848.*

IT is justly remarked by Dr. Chase, in his preface to the work before us, that "in reading these Constitutions and Canons of the Apostles, the Christian of the present day will be likely to exclaim—a splendid specimen of pious fraud, a strange mixture of good and evil!" Viewing the work in the light of its own claims, as a pretended production of apostolic times, embodying a system of church discipline stamped with apostolic authority, it is indeed a remarkable "specimen of pious fraud." Still we hail its publication with pleasure, and think that Dr. Chase has done the church good service, by putting within the reach of the Christian student, and in a very convenient form, a work which hitherto has been almost inaccessible to the great mass of the Christian ministry in our country. There is, as we shall presently see, considerable diversity of opinion among the learned as to the age in which the Constitutions were framed; but whatever be the true date of their origin, there can be no doubt that the collection belongs to a remote Christian antiquity; and it is all the more precious from the fact that so few literary monuments of the earlier ages of the church have been preserved. It is a document of high value and importance for illustrating the ecclesiastical history of a very distant period,

during a part of which at least, paganism was the dominant religion, the sighing of Christian prisoners was heard, and the blood of Christian martyrs was flowing in abundant streams.

The present edition, which, by the way, is executed with singular elegance—consists of Whiston's translation of the Greek text of the Constitutions and Canons, revised by Dr. Chase, and an Essay, historical and critical, on their origin and contents, by Dr. O. C. Krabbe, characterized by that fulness of learned research for which the scholars of Germany are so eminent. The Constitutions themselves are divided into eight books, in which various topics are handled, not however in any thing like logical order; some of them being of a doctrinal cast, though they mostly refer to practical rules of life, ecclesiastical discipline, and forms of worship.

Among Romanist authors a wide diversity of judgment obtains respecting both the age and the authority of the Constitutions. Bovius, Turrian and Stapleton, who may be ranked among their strongest advocates, go the length of asserting that "they are full of the apostolic spirit," and that "if the church should receive them into the canon of scripture, she would have as much reason for holding them, as she has for holding the Epistle of James to be canonical." Bellarmine, on the contrary, while he makes frequent use of them in his defence of the Romish system, says decidedly that they are not the production of Clement, but belong to a later age. Baronius was of the same mind. Tillemont affirms that they were fabricated in the sixth century. Cotelierius, who published a noble edition of them, with a Latin translation, and numerous notes, is uncertain whether the author lived before or after the days of Epiphanius. With a few unimportant exceptions, Protestant writers agree in rejecting both the apostolic and the Clementine origin of the Constitutions. Blondell thinks that they were composed by the author of the Recognitions, about A. D. 180. Bishop Beveridge conjectured from a passage in the last canon, that they were written by Clement of Alexandria. Pierson supposes that, though they did not assume their present form until after the times of Epiphanius, they still exhibit substantially the instructions to the churches given by the Apostles,—by Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Ignatius and others of their contemporaries. The eccentric Whiston, however, far

outstripped all other Protestant and even Popish theologians, in the zeal with which he defended their claims, boldly maintaining that they form a part of the divine rule of faith and manners, and are nothing less than a collection of the laws which the Saviour gave his apostles during the period of forty days between his resurrection and ascension. He was opposed by Le Clerc, who endeavoured to prove that they were the work of an Arian of the age of Constantine. Ittig who has largely discussed the subject, and Usher unite in holding that they first became known in the course of the fourth century, and were afterwards corrupted by an Arian in the sixth. But of all the Protestant authors who have treated of the origin and merits of the Constitutions, the name of the great Daillé deserves to be mentioned with the highest respect, for to him belongs the honour of having proved most conclusively that they are the work neither of the apostles nor of the Roman Clement.

At the risk of being tedious we cannot forbear quoting the sentiments of one or two writers of more modern date. Schröckh says it is of less importance to know who was the author, than at what period he lived, and why he deceived the world. His judgment is that the work was composed by some unknown author under the heathen emperors, towards the end of the third or beginning of the fourth century. Starck says that if we collect and compare the traces of more ancient and more recent times, it becomes quite clear that the Constitutions are the productions neither of one man nor one age, but are a confused collection made here and there in the churches founded by apostles, of ecclesiastical laws, some of them old, some new, and which received the name they bear, simply because these churches were of apostolic origin.

The author of the historical Essay decidedly rejects the idea that the Constitutions were made up of sundry earlier documents, on the ground that no mention is made of any such documents by ancient writers, and that no remains of them have come down to us. He also maintains that the marked uniformity of the style precludes the supposition of more than one pen having been engaged in the composition. As to its age, he states that the external testimonies constrain us to seek for the origin of the work before the fourth century, a conclusion to which all the

internal evidences conduct us; while the Constitutions bear on themselves decisive proof that they must have been written towards the end of the third century. All their contents testify to this most strikingly; their form of public divine worship, their ritual and disciplinary institutions, the state of the teachers and subordinate officers of the church are so many witnesses to the truth of this averment. The whole internal and external form of the church as here portrayed, we find in the third century. In short they bear the strong impress of the age of Cyprian, and must have proceeded from the spirit, and have been designed to further the aims of that eminent man. To establish this position he goes into a minute and even tedious examination of the several books. He then discusses at much length the object of the author of the Constitutions. On this point he says, it is manifest from the nature of the case, that he must have had some plan whose accomplishment he deemed desirable and possible. His design seems to have been twofold, viz., to promote the unity of the church, and to establish a hierarchal form of government. The first of these objects he proposed to attain not by setting up a standard of doctrine or dogmatical canons, but rather an uniform system of discipline, ceremonies, and ecclesiastical arrangements. It was outward uniformity, and not unity in the scriptural sense of the word, at which he aimed,—not the unity which consists essentially in the being baptized into one spirit, and the being made partakers of a common divine life,—not the unity of believers, but the visible unity of a common usage. With this idea there was combined another, which may be traced throughout the entire work, viz., that the constitution of the Christian church is only an improved copy of the Jewish temple worship. In a word the author was a decided hierarchist, and his special purpose in getting up the Constitutions, and in palming them upon the world as the production of the Apostles, was the revival in the New Testament church of the laws and institutions of the ancient hierarchy.

From the above hasty summary of opinions, it will be seen that both Popish and Protestant theologians are greatly divided in judgment as to the age and author of this work; and that, on the whole, the latter class allow it a higher antiquity than the former. The views of Dr. Krabbe, who has examined the whole subject with so much thoroughness and care, are certain-

ly entitled to great weight, still, we must confess that his solution of this difficult historical problem does not completely satisfy us. We are inclined to regard the Constitutions, in the shape in which they have come down to us, as the work of more than one writer. The argument of Dr. Krabbe against this theory, founded on the uniformity of the style appears to us not to be of much weight, because the nature of the topics handled, is such as almost to preclude the possibility of a sensible diversity of style. Our statute book, for example, is the joint production of many men, yet no one would attempt to determine the authorship of its various chapters or enactments by the test of style, which, from the necessity of the case is uniform. So in the work before us, the absence of a varied style is no evidence of its being the production of a single author, for each succeeding contributor would naturally adopt the style of his predecessors. On Dr. Krabbe's theory, we cannot account for the numerous traces of Arianism which the Constitutions confessedly bear. If, as he maintains, the author belonged to the Cyprianic age, then it is quite obvious that those portions which savour of the Arian heresy must have been interpolated at a later period; and if the dogmatic character of the work has been changed, it is, to say the least, not improbable that other alterations or additions were made in those parts of it which refer to church usages and discipline. After all, the question whether one man or many men composed the Constitutions is more curious than important; their real value arises from the light they cast on the history and antiquities of the church, by showing what her condition was in the times when the authors lived.

In this point of view, though claiming to be what they are not, and assuming a name to which they have not the shadow of a title, they are of inestimable worth to the student of ecclesiastical history. The aim of their authors seems to have been to give a sort of apostolic sanction to rites and ceremonies to which the primitive Christians were strangers, and to incorporate with the constitution of the church certain hierarchal elements, for which not only can no warrant be found in the New Testament, but which are contrary to the whole spirit of the Christian dispensation. At the same time we find in these constitutions a considerable amount of pure and precious apos-

tolic truth. Thus in the opening chapter there is a description of the nature of the church of Christ, and of the great ends of her existence, as accurate as it is beautiful: "The catholic church is the plantation of God and his beloved vineyard, consisting of those who have believed in his unerring divine religion; who are heirs by faith of his everlasting kingdom; who are partakers of his divine influence, and of the communications of the Holy Spirit; who are armed and inwardly strengthened with his fear, through Jesus; who enjoy the benefit of the sprinkling of the precious and innocent blood of Christ; who have free liberty to call the Almighty God, Father, being fellow heirs and joint partakers of his beloved Son." Other passages might be quoted, embodying sound doctrine and pure morality, though none of them bear the marks of a very vigorous mind.

Instead, however, of enlarging on the dogmatical character of the Apostolical Constitutions, we propose to inquire—what is the form of government exhibited in them, and which, we may reasonably suppose, actually existed in the church at the period of their composition? We may here observe, that we do not wonder that the high-toned hierarchists of modern days, both Roman and Anglican, while making such ado about primitive order, and the authority of the primitive church, are so shy of a work on many accounts one of the most remarkable of the times to which it belongs. Its author or authors had clearly derived their ideas of the church from the ancient Jewish model; their manifest design is to establish a hierarchy; yet when we examine their work carefully, we discover a marked dissimilarity between the form of government portrayed in it, and all the existing platforms of prelacy; we meet with numerous statements respecting the ministry, which no hermeneutics can explain consistently with the hierarchal theory of Rome, Oxford, or New York. Of prelacy in the ordinary acceptation of the term, or the system which makes the bishop, the pastor not of a single congregation, but of a large number of them associated in the form of a diocese, no traces can be discovered in the Constitutions. In fact the counterpart of the platform of government which they exhibit is not to be found in any one of the existing forms of polity in the Christian church. Presbyterianism per-

haps comes the nearest to it, but they are not identical; in every regularly constituted congregation there was a bishop or pastor, there were presbyters and deacons; but the functions of the presbyter differed in some important respects from those of the ruling elder of the present day; and the duties of the deacon, though in the main the same as those discharged by deacons in Presbyterian congregations included some things which do not come within the province of the latter.

Let us then begin with the office of the Bishop. What were the duties of the bishop; did he stand in a direct or only indirect relation to the Christian people; was it his business to instruct them and exercise the discipline of Christ's house immediately, or through the agency of others; in other words, was he a parochial or a diocesan bishop? In reply to this inquiry, we say that he occupied the position and discharged the duties of a simple pastor of a congregation; and if our limits allowed it, we might quote a multitude of passages from the Apostolical Constitutions in which this fact is either expressly asserted, or clearly implied. For instance, Canon XL, (B. viii. p. 250) declares,—“Let not the presbyters and deacons do any thing without the consent of the bishop; for it is he who is entrusted with the people of the Lord, and will be required to give an account of their souls. We command that the bishop have power over the goods of the church; for if he be entrusted with the precious souls of men, much more ought he to give directions about goods, that under his authority they all be distributed by the presbyters and deacons to those in want.” Again, in chapter 1st of the same book, we find the following,—“Moreover let not a bishop be exalted against the deacons and the presbyters; nor the presbyters against the people, *for from each and all of these is the composition of the congregation.*” Words could hardly be more express. The directions concerning the election and ordination of a bishop are in precise accordance with this statement.” In the first place, therefore, a bishop to be ordained is to be unblameable in all things, a select person, *chosen by the whole people*. And when he is named and approved, let the people assemble, with the presbytery, and bishops that are present, on the Lord's day; and let them give their consent. And let him who is preferred among

the rest ask the presbytery and the people, whether this is the person whom they desire for their ruler. And if they give their consent, let him ask further, whether he has a good testimony from all men, as to his worthiness for so great and glorious an authority; whether all things relating to his piety towards God are right; whether justice towards men hath been observed by him; whether the affairs of his family have been well ordered by him. And if all the assembly together do, according to truth and not prejudice, testify that he is such a one, let them the third time, as before God the Judge, and Christ, the Holy Ghost also assuredly being present, and all the holy ministering spirits, ask again, whether he is truly worthy of this ministry. And if they agree the third time, that he is worthy, let them all be demanded their vote; and when they all give it willingly, let them be heard. And silence being made, let one of the principal bishops—the rest of the bishops and presbyters praying silently and the deacons holding the holy gospels open upon the head of him that is to be ordained—say to God;” then follows the form of prayer; we may add that neither in the prayer, nor in any other part of the chapter is imposition of hands spoken of. B. viii. p. 202. To these passages may be added what is said in the curious “description of a church and the clergy,” in which, the former and its officers are compared to a ship and her crew: “O Bishop, when thou callest an assembly of the church, as one that is the commander of a great ship, appoint the assemblies to be made with great skill; charging the deacons, as mariners, to prepare places for the brethren as for passengers with all due care and decorum. And first let the building be long, with its head to the east, its vestries on both sides at the east end, and so it will be like a ship. In the middle let the bishop’s throne* be placed; and on each side of him let the presbytery sit down; and let the deacons stand near at hand; for they are like the mariners and managers of the ship. While the Gospel is read, let all the presbyters and deacons, and all the people stand up in great silence. In the next place let the presbyters one by one, and not all together exhort the people, and the bishop in the last place as being the commander.” B. ii. p. 70.

* The original term simply means an official seat; and the sentence properly rendered would read “let the bishop’s chair be placed,” &c.

The direct relation of the bishop to the congregation, expressly declared in the passages already quoted, is also implied in the directions addressed to him, to teach and exercise discipline. "Be careful, therefore O Bishop, to study the word of God, that thou mayest copiously nourish thy people with much doctrine, and enlighten them with the light of the law." B. ii. p. 15. "For it becometh you, bishops, to be guides and watchmen to the people, as ye yourselves have Christ for your guide and watchman. For the Lord said by Ezekiel, speaking to every one of you: '*Son of man, &c.*' The trumpet is the holy Gospel, the watchman is the bishop, who is set in the church, who is obliged in his preaching to testify and vehemently to forewarn of that judgment. If ye do not declare and testify this to the people, the sins of those who are ignorant of it will be found upon you. Wherefore warn and reprove with boldness the perverse, teach the ignorant, confirm those that understand, bring back those that go astray." B. ii. p. 17. "The bishop is the minister of the word, the keeper of knowledge, the mediator between God and you in the several parts of your divine worship. He is the teacher of piety; and next after God, he is your father, who hath begotten you again to the adoption of sons by water and the Spirit." B. ii. p. 43. "Do not thou, O Bishop, immediately abhor any person who hath fallen into one or two offences, nor shalt thou exclude him from the word of the Lord, nor reject him from common intercourse; as thou receivest a heathen, after thou hast instructed and baptized him, so do thou let all join in prayers for this man, and restore him by imposition of hands to his ancient place among the flock, as one purified by repentance." B. ii. p. 54, 55.

To these passages, we might were it requisite add many others of similar import. Nor is it necessary to comment on those we have quoted; they speak for themselves. The directions addressed to the bishop to preach the gospel, to exercise a constant and minute supervision of the people committed to his charge, for whose souls he is especially responsible, and to administer the discipline of Christ's house, plainly indicate that his charge was precisely equivalent to that of a modern pastor. Every unprejudiced reader must feel that it would be perfectly preposterous to give directions like these, for instance, to the bishop of London—or of New York, or in fact to any diocesan

prelate, unless (as is commonly the case with Scottish and American prelates) he is at the same time the rector of a particular parish. Did it fall in with our present design, we could adduce evidence of the same kind, in support of this position from the epistles of the Apostolic fathers, Clement, Polycarp, and Ignatius, who lived long before the author of the Constitutions; and likewise from Bingham's lists of the bishoprics in the early church. In all these documents, facts and circumstances are detailed, which it is impossible to account for, except on the supposition that the relations of a primitive bishop were just those of a modern pastor. There is only one passage in the work before us that seems to conflict with the preceding statements, to overlook which might appear uncandid; it is as follows: "We have heard from our Lord that a pastor who is to be ordained a bishop for the churches in every parish must be blameless—and not under fifty years of age." B. ii. p. 12. Such is Whiston's rendering of it, and it seems to imply that "*the parish*"—παροιμία—was equivalent to a diocese, and included many distinctly organised congregations. This inference would not be a fair one, in the face of so many other passages of directly opposite import, even if we were quite sure that the reading in this place is genuine. But there is reason to believe that the words—εις τας ἐκκλησίας—have been interpolated. Cotelierius, who, by the way, renders the phrase in question—"in aliqua ecclesia et parœcia," declares that the interpolation of single words and expressions are very numerous, while at the same time it is impossible to detect them. Romanist though he was, his own rendering of the passage, shows that he was somewhat suspicious of its genuineness, or at all events, that in his judgment, the existence of diocesan prelacy could not be fairly concluded from it.

The next point of inquiry respects the office of *Presbyter*. It is evident from various passages in the Apostolic Constitutions, that, in every congregation fully organised, there was a *bench of Presbyters*—a presbytery. While the bishop is always spoken of as holding his position alone, the presbyter is as invariably represented as forming one of a college. "If any determine to invite elder women to an entertainment—let what is the pastor's due, be set apart in the feast for him; let a double portion be set apart for the presbyters, as for those who labour

about the word and doctrine." B. ii. p. 45. "The deacon is to minister to the bishop and to the *presbyters*, and not to meddle with the other offices." B. ii. p. 93. "Moreover let not the bishop be exalted against the deacons and the presbyters; nor the Presbyters against the people; *for from each and all of these is the composition of the congregation.*" B. ii. p. 199. "If a brother or sister come from another parish, bringing recommendatory letters, let the deacon inquire whether they are faithful, of the church, not defiled by heresy; when he is satisfied in these questions, let him conduct every one to the place proper for him. If a presbyter come from another parish, let him be received to communion by *the presbyters*; if a deacon by the deacons; if a bishop, let him sit with the bishop, and be allowed the same honour with himself." B. ii. p. 71, 72.

The difference between the bishop and the presbyter of the Constitutions is nowhere precisely and formally stated; yet it is plain that the former was more than *primus inter pares*, for it is expressly declared that "sacred offices are conferred by the laying on of the hands of the bishop." "We do not permit presbyters, but only bishops, to ordain deacons or deaconesses, or readers, or servants," &c. B. iii. p. 87. In the prayer appointed to be used at the ordination of a presbyter (which was to be held "in the presence of the presbyters and deacons") the following language occurs: "O Lord Almighty, do thou thyself now look upon this thy servant, who is *put into the presbytery* by the vote and determination of the whole clergy.* And do thou replenish him with the spirit of grace and counsel *to assist and govern thy people* with a pure heart." B. viii. p. 224. This agrees with the account elsewhere given of the presbytery as being "the counsellors of the bishop; the sanhedrim and senate of the church." B. ii. p. 45. Each presbyter was invested with authority "to teach,† to offer (i. e. administer the Lord's Supper)

* The term clergy as used in the Apostolic Constitutions includes all who were in any way connected officially with the congregation—bishop, presbyters, deacons, deaconesses, readers, singers, porters, servants. See B. iii. p. 87.

† As to the preaching of presbyters, different rules obtained in different parts of the church. Thus Possidius mentions in his life of Augustine that while he (Augustine) was a presbyter, the bishop gave him power "*coram se in ecclesia evangelium praeedicandi—contra usum ac consuetudinem Africarum ecclesiarum. Postea porro praecedente exemplo, accepta ab episcopis potestate, presbyteri nonnulli coram episcopis populo tractare coeperunt verbum Dei.*" We may also state,

to baptize, and to bless the people," (B. iii. p. 93); though in ordinary circumstances the performance of these offices devolved upon the bishop, as the pastor of the congregation. When he was present, or rather in the usual weekly assemblies of the congregation, it was customary for several of the presbyters, in succession to exhort the people, before the delivery of *the* sermon by the bishop. Thus in the chapter in which the Christian congregation is compared to a ship, directions are given as to the order in which the books of scripture are to be read, and the conduct of the presbyters, deacons and people" while the gospel is read; "In the next place, let the presbyters, *one by one*, not altogether, exhort the people, and the bishop in the last place as being the commander of the ship." B. ii. 70.

We come next to the office of the *Deacon*. He was one of the clerical order, as has been already shown, in common with the porter, and the lamplighters, but is nowhere styled a priest: nor is the office anywhere represented as forming one of the orders of the priesthood. It is perfectly obvious from the most cursory inspection of the Constitutions that there was in every properly organized congregation a *bench of Deacons*, as well as of presbyters. On this point it is needless to multiply quotations, as it is sufficiently evident from those already made. The *duties* of the deacon appear to have been very various; and hence he is much more frequently mentioned in the Constitutions than the presbyter. He was the bishop's "minister;" or the organ through which he obtained information of what was passing among the people of his charge, and the medium of communication with the poor and needy. "Let the deacon order such things as he is able, by himself, receiving power from the bishop. But the weighty matters, let the Bishop judge. But let the deacon be the bishop's ear, and eye, and mouth, and soul, and heart, that the bishop may not be distracted with many cares, but with such only as are considerable." B. II. p. 59. "Let both the deacons and the deacon-

that in the 4th and beginning of the 5th century, we find in North Africa traces of an order of officers called *seniores plebis* of which no mention is made in the Constitutions. Augustine repeatedly refers to them. Optatus, De Schis. Donat. p. 168, says "Omnes vos episcopi, presbyteri, diacones, *seniores*." "Adhibite Conclericos et *Seniores plebis*." p. 169. They were not clerical presbyters, but held a middle position between the clergy and the laity. They were in fact the representatives of the latter. See Guerike's Lehrbuch der christ. kirch. Archäologie. p. 49.

nesses be ready to carry messages, to travel about, to minister and serve." B. III. p. 92. It was his business, as appears from a passage already quoted, to look after those who had recently come within the bounds of the congregation, to receive their letters of commendation, to examine into their principles and character, and in the event of their admission to membership to assign them their proper places in the church.

Again in the assemblies for public worship, the deacons discharged various offices. "Let the deacons stand near at hand, (i. e., the bishop and the presbytery), in close and small girt garments;* for they are like the mariners and managers of the ship." B. II. p. 69. They were the disposers of places, "that every one of those who came in might go to his proper place, and not sit at the entrance"—"if any one be found sitting out of his place, let him be rebuked by the deacon, as a messenger of the foreship." It devolved also on them to "oversee the people, that no one may whisper, nor slumber, nor laugh, nor nod." Sometimes a deacon read "the lessons from the gospels," while another "prayed for the whole church, for the whole world, and the several parts of it, and the fruits of it." They also assisted in the administration of the Lord's Supper, performing those services which are now rendered by ruling elders. "After the prayer (of consecration) is over, let *some* of the deacons attend upon the oblation of the eucharist, ministering to the Lord's body. Let *others* of *them* watch the multitude and keep them silent." B. II. p. 71. Not a word, however, is said about either their preaching sermons of their own, or reading the homilies of others. But one of their principal duties was the taking care of the poor; yet even in the discharge of this office they were directed to keep themselves in constant communication with the bishop. They must do nothing in the way of relieving the necessities of the afflicted without the knowledge and express warrant of the bishop; and the reason assigned for this of itself affords decisive evidence that he was the pastor of an

* Whether the "close and small girt garment" was the official habiliment of the deacon, does not appear. This, however, is the only place in which the deacon's dress, official or otherwise, is referred to. Of the bishops and presbyter's robes no account is given; not the most distant allusion is made to the official dress of these officers, in the Constitutions, or even in the Canons, where we might expect to meet some reference to badges of office of this sort, if any such had existed at the time.

ordinary congregation. "Let not the deacon do anything at all without his bishop, nor give anything without his consent. For if he give to any one as to a person in distress, without the bishop's knowledge, *he will give it so that it must tend to the reproach of the bishop*, and will accuse him as careless of the distressed." "If, therefore, O deacon, thou knowest any one in distress, *put the bishop in mind of him, and so give to him*; but do nothing in a clandestine way, lest thou raise a murmur against him," B. II. p. 47.

There are a few other inferior offices incidentally mentioned, such as that of the reader, the porter, and the deaconness, who performed toward those of her own sex certain duties, which, with the views and in the state of society then existing, could not be so suitably discharged by men. All these officers are included by the authors of the Constitutions under the general name of the *clergy*; but as their functions are not particularly described, and, if they do not appear to have taken any share in the government of the church, they may be dismissed without further notice. There is, however, a canon on the subject of councils or synods, which should not be passed over, viz., the 38th, which is as follows, "Let a council of bishops be held twice in the year; and let them ask one another the doctrines of piety; and let them determine the ecclesiastical disputes that happen; once in the fourth week of Pentecost, and again on the 12th of October." As both the Constitutions and the canons have confessedly come down to us in a vitiated text, it is quite possible that the one just quoted, originally provided for the presence of others beside bishops, in these semi-annual synods, perhaps for the *seniores plebis*, or the representatives of the people. But taking it as it stands, it reveals a fact of great importance respecting the government of the early church. We may fairly infer from the frequency with which these synods met that their members lived near each other, and therefore must have been pastors of congregations. It is obvious, moreover from the express terms of the canon, that the synods then held were not advisory councils, but courts of judicature. It also appears from the 37th canon, that these synods had jurisdiction not only over bishops, but likewise over presbyters and deacons; for this canon provides that—"If any bishop that is ordained do not undertake his office, nor take care of the people committed

to him, he shall be suspended until he do undertake it; and in like manner, a presbyter and a deacon. But if he go, and be not received because of the ill temper of the people, let the *clergy of that city be suspended* because they have not taught that disobedient people better."

Such then is an outline of the form of government set forth in the Apostolic Constitutions, and which must have existed in the church during the period when their author or authors lived. Each congregation was under the care of its *bishop*, who was the pastor of the people, not indirectly, like a modern diocesan bishop, but immediately; on whom especially devolved the duty of preaching the word, administering the sacraments, exercising discipline, ascertaining and providing for the wants of the poor, in short, just that work with which an ordinary pastor in the present day is occupied. Next to the bishop was the *presbytery* or *the bench of presbyters*, who collectively constituted his council, while each of them, under his direction, had authority to exhort, preach, and administer the sacraments. And finally, there were the *deacons*, who discharged a multitude of subordinate officers, as the servants of the bishop, the supervisors of the people when met for public worship, and the overseers of the poor. Though this system, at the period referred to, appears to have obtained in most of the countries in which the church had gained a footing, we do not believe that it was universal. In the churches of North Africa it probably existed in a somewhat modified form. Even in apostolic times, there is reason for thinking—if we take all the testimony scriptural and ecclesiastical into account—that the platform of government was not precisely the same in all parts of the church,* and if so, we might expect to find the same circumstantial diversity long after the decease of the apostles.

It may be asked, is not the scheme of government exhibited in the Apostolic Constitutions, *Prelacy*? To this question we reply,—if the essence of prelacy be understood to consist in the want of parity among church officers, then the scheme under consideration was one of the various forms in which prelacy may exist; for although, the porter, the servant, the reader,

* Our readers may not agree with us in this remark; but it seems to us that there was a difference, slight indeed, but still a difference, between the constitution of the church of Philippi, and the church of Jerusalem.

the deaconesses and the deacon were not "ministers of the word," they were all clerics, in the sense in which the term was then used; they were all ordained to office by the imposition of hands; and of course in the clerical order there were as many ranks as there were offices between those of the pastor and the porter. In the elevation of the bishop above the presbyter, and placing in his hands the sole power of ordination, in the large increase of clerical offices, and in the so strongly marked distinction between the clergy and the laity, we recognise so many departures from the simplicity of apostolic times. We discover in all parts of the work before us evidences that the process of declension begun under the eyes of the apostles themselves, had made great progress, affecting every portion of the constitution of the church, doctrine, discipline, worship and government. It does not fall in with our design to inquire what form of government the first preachers of the gospel established, nor to discuss the question whether the church in all ages is bound to conform herself to this precise model, without the least modification; whatever may be the true answers to these questions, it seems perfectly obvious to us that the system of government existing in the second or third or fourth century must have diverged in a greater or less degree from that founded by the apostles, for the reason mentioned above—the gradual but constant declension of the church from primitive purity. To say that the constitution of the ministry remained intact, while ministers were becoming more and more ambitious and worldly, while the faith and worship of the church were being slowly corrupted by heresy and superstition is to affirm the opposite of what is declared by all the analogies of history.

Although the scheme of government portrayed in the Constitutions and Canons may be termed in a certain sense, prelatic, it does not follow that modern *jure divino* prelacy can derive support for its claims from this fact. On the contrary, the views every where given of the relations, and duties of bishop, the presbytery, the deacons are totally inconsistent with the supposition that prelacy as it now exists, existed then, as those who adopt the high *jure divino* principle are bound to show. To argue that the two systems are entirely or even substantially the same, because of an identity of name is sheer sophistry. When we examine into the relations and the duties of the an-

cient bishop, or prelate if you will, and of the ancient deacon we find that they discharged very different functions from those belonging to the officers bearing the same name under prelacy as it now exists. The one was congregational; the other diocesan prelacy. The ancient bishop was a pastor of the *people*, bound to instruct and watch over them in person. The modern bishop, as a bishop, is the pastor of his *clergy*, and has nothing to do directly with the people. The ancient deacon, though called a clergyman, in common with all officially connected in any way with the church, was not a minister of the word, but a helper of his pastor in managing "the outward business" of the congregation. The modern prelatic deacon is an incipient minister of the word, holding a position whether viewed in his relation to "his ordinary," or to the Christian people entirely different from that of his ancient name-sake. We are quite ready to admit that congregational prelacy was gradually expanded into—perhaps we may say, prepared the way for—diocesan, after the ancient paganism had been laid low, and the church was united with the state; but this result is far from showing that the systems are identical; the utmost that it can prove is that there were certain moral affinities between them. If prelacy in its present form could be contracted again to its ancient dimensions, we apprehend there are many even among presbyterians, who would look upon the difference between that system and their own as hardly worth contending about. The prelacy of the Constitutions, so far as its outward form is concerned bears a much closer resemblance to presbyterianism, than to any other system—(though when accurately compared we find a material dissimilarity between them,) and this fact is as it seems to us, an important element in the historical argument to prove that the general principles of presbyterianism were practised in the earliest and purest times of the church.

In conclusion, we beg to say that we hail with real pleasure the re-publication of this venerable monument of Christian antiquity. The pastor, and the student of theology are thus enabled to avail themselves of original sources of information, in prosecuting their inquiries respecting the internal state and condition of the church during a period when her voice is supposed by multitudes to be as authoritative as that of her Divine Master himself. The study of the Constitutions may neither beget nor

strengthen the conviction in the reader's mind that the presbyterian system is in all its parts *jure divino*; but if it be prosecuted with any measure of candour, we are perfectly certain that it will produce the persuasion that the modern *jure divino* prelatist who makes so much ado about the practice and testimony of antiquity, must stand self-condemned, for having departed so widely from what, on his principles, is the true and unalterable model of the church.

ART. III.—*The History of Catechizing.*

AMONG the works of Augustine, as scholars well know, is one on *Catechizing*.* It was written at the request of a Carthaginian deacon, named Deogratias. Now though it is not pretended that those who were contemplated in this instruction were children, or that the work was done by question and answer, yet when it is considered that the catechumens who came from heathenism were only children of a larger growth, often rudely ignorant, it will be readily believed that this book of the excellent bishop contains useful lessons for ourselves. The Carthaginian friend had lamented to him the hardness and tediousness of the work; and much of Augustine's treatise is intended to prevent this, and to show him how he may shed a most attractive cheerfulness over the whole business of catechizing. These advices are just as applicable to the catechist of modern times. "Remedies," says he, "are to be sought of God, whereby this narrowness of spirit may be enlarged, that so we may exult in fervour of soul, and take delight in the tranquillity of a good work: for the Lord loveth a cheerful giver." He urges his correspondent to come cheerfully to the duties of teaching, however annoying, by adducing the example of Christ, and even of human nurses, who reduce the infant's food to the minutest portions, that the child may be able to receive it.

Who that has ever taught a class of children or youth does

* *De Catechizandis Rudibus.*

not perceive that such advices as those which follow proceeded from experience? "If we grow weary of saying over things which are hackneyed and fit for babes, let us come close to them by fraternal, paternal, maternal love, and when thus joined to them in heart, we shall find even the old things seem new. For such is the power of sympathy, that when they are affected by our speaking, we also are affected by their learning, and thus the influence is mutual: so, in a manner, they speak the things which they hear us say, and we learn the things which we are teaching. Do we not find it thus, in regard to certain spacious and beautiful places, in city or country, which we have been accustomed to pass by without any pleasure, but which, when we exhibit to friends who have never beheld them, we contemplate with all the charm of novelty? And this the more, the more they are our friends: such being the bond of friendship, that the more we love them, the more do the old things become new. But if we have made a little proficiency in the contemplation of things, we shall not wish those whom we love to be astonished and delighted by the works of men's hands; but we desire to lift them to the plan and design of the author, and thence to rise to admiration and praise of the all-creating God, where we have the end of a love the most fertile. How much more ought we to delight, when any approach to learn about God himself, for whose sake all things are to be learned; and how ought our old instructions to grow fresh, by sympathy with their feeling of novelty?" These are expressions of our common nature, though uttered fourteen hundred years ago. And what is their principle? That warm love, and tender sympathy with the young, will make all the repetitions and labours of catechizing delightful.

Augustine lays down rules for arousing the attention of the careless, which are just as seasonable in a mission-assembly or in a parochial school, as in ancient Carthage or Hippo. And when all means, of narrative, of sudden question, of gentle remark are exhausted, and the learner is still hardened and averse, he says, we must "rather speak concerning him to God, than concerning God to him."^{*}

So much in earnest is Augustine, that he gives a specimen,

* "*Magisque pro illo ad Deum, quam illi de Deo multa dicenda.*" §. 18.

running through a number of chapters, of the sort of instruction which a Catechist of that day might give to a gentile, who should come for instruction. And then he goes over the same, under a shorter form.

The researches of the learned have brought many interesting things to light respecting the apostolical and primitive Catechizing. Professor Walch, of Jena, has treated this subject: we venture to present a few gleanings from his rich harvest.*

The word *catechize* is almost Greek. The original verb occurs often in the New Testament, but in different senses. In Acts xxi. 21, it means "to learn anything by common report;" in Rom. ii. 18, Gal. v. 6, 1 Cor. xiv. 19, "to be taught about religion;" in Luke i. 4, and Acts xviii. 25 "to initiate in Christian rudiments." The word is so used also by early church-writers.

This was not new among Hebrew Christians. When in Gen. xviii. 19, God says that Abraham will *command* his household, the word implies some previous instruction as to the nature of the command. Deut. i. 1-6, is an ordinance of catechizing, for all ages; so also, Ex. xii. 26, the rule about instructing children in the meaning of the passover.†

The apostles employed simple teaching, that is catechetical instruction: *I have fed you with milk*, says Paul to the Corinthians; and Clement of Alexandria applies this to catechizing. Such summaries as are found in Heb. vi. 1, were by the ancients called *catechetical*, by way of pre-eminence.

The persons submitted to this mode of instruction were called *Catechumens*. They were generally as has been already said, adults, but they were in knowledge no better than children. So they are expressly called, in Scripture; Heb. v. 13, 14. Paul divides Christians into adults and children or babes, who must be fed with infant's food. So also, 1 Cor. iii. 1, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto *babes* in Christ." Apollos, though a learned Alexandrian Jew, and a man of eloquence, was, in a sort, a Catechumen. "This man was instructed (*catechized*, the word is) in the way of the Lord," and a little after, "Knowing only the baptism of John:" he was therefore an unbaptized learner,

* *Miscellanea Sacra*. See a translation in *Biblical Repertory* for 1827, p. 37 ff.

† See also Deut. xii. 19. Josh. iv. 6, vii. 22, 24, 15. 1 Sam. i. 25. Ps. lxxviii. 4, 5.

a Catechumen. That excellent woman, Priscilla, and her husband, Aquila, took him "and expounded unto him the way of the Lord more perfectly." Some think that the "form of sound words," which Paul recommends to Timothy, (2 Tim. i. 13) was some little compend or syllabus of catechetical instruction. It is the better opinion, however, that the apostles left nothing of this kind in writing. We must not ascribe everything to the first age, which we find in use a little later. "Let it not be supposed," says a learned writer, "that the same kind of catechetical instruction was used in the time of the Apostles, which obtained in later ages, especially in the fourth and fifth centuries, when the catechumens were divided into distinct grades and classes. For in that first age of Christianity, when the gospel was preached by the Apostles themselves, many extraordinary and miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were enjoyed, and especially that peculiar gift, conferred on the apostles, of trying the spirits, whether they were of God."*

The method of question and answer is not essential to catechizing, as is vulgarly thought, but is nevertheless closely connected with it, and of great importance. Here may be cited the celebrated Hoornbeek, one of the greater lights of Presbyterian Holland, in the seventeenth century. "The questions, the manner of examining, and the explanation, ought to be conformed to the capacity of the catechumens and hearers, (Prov. xxii. 8, Isaiah viii. 2) so that all things may be done with simplicity and perspicuity, for the edification of all; therefore the first and principal study of the catechist is, to be able to interrogate with dexterity (Luke ii. 46), so to propose and vary his questions, that the mind may be insensibly directed to the answer, and may scarcely avoid seeing it; and nothing is so necessary to this end, as to let down the manner of proposing questions to the capacity of children. *It is more important to interrogate properly than to explain*; for the former enters into the very nature of the catechesis, and the whole answer follows more or less readily, according as the question has been more or less clearly proposed."†

It was at a period subsequent to that of the apostles, that the regular Catechumens came into notice. These were they,

* Van Dale, *Historia Baptismorum*, p. 416.

† Hoornbeek: *Misc. Sacra*, l. i. c. 12.

whose religious proficiency was not yet enough to warrant their reception into the church. They were also called *Auditores* or Hearers. They might attend the reading and preaching of the church-service, but not the communion. The time of this probation differed with the individual; but the Council of Elvira ordained that it should not be less than two years. Origen speaks of two classes. those who only received private instruction, and those who frequented assemblies, and were approaching baptism.

Those who gave special instruction to these candidates were called *Catechists*. In Carthage and Alexandria, it was thought important to seek out men of knowledge and prudence, if possible also of learning, who might be able to contend with the Gentiles, and resolve their doubts. What is called the Apostles' Creed was probably framed for the use of catechumens. The whole theology of the Grecian world was affected by the famous normal SCHOOL OF CATECHISTS, at Alexandria. Of its origin Neander can find no trace. Among its distinguished teachers, who gave fame to the institution, were Pantaenus, Clements Alexandrinus, Origen, Heraclas, and Dionysius. Origen, when eighteen years of age, was a catechumen at this school. Clement of Alexandria was one of these catechists.*

It would be lost labour to endeavour to trace catechetical instruction through the Dark Ages. After all the ingenious efforts of Maitland and others, to show that they were more full of light than our own, it is hard not to perceive, that they were more concerned with legends, martyrologies, rosaries, feasts, and relics, than with any solid instruction. Here and there, however, we find attention drawn to the matter. At the Council of Tours, A. D. 1313, and at the second of Mentz, there were decrees enjoining the religious teaching of the young; the same order occurs in the capitulary of Charlemagne. In all these it was ordained that the instruction should be given in the vulgar tongue. From these decrees, and from other documents, we learn what constituted the body of catechetical instruction in that day. It comprised the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer; though sometimes one of the three is omitted. Instead of the Commandments, we find an

* Neander, I. p. 900. Eusebius V. 10.

enumeration of capital sins. It was out of regard to the time-honoured usage, in this respect, that the early Reformers followed the same order in their Catechism. There is a specimen of middle-age labours, in this line, extant in the Weissenberg Theotisc Catechism of the ninth century.* This contains the Lord's Prayer with an exposition, the capital sins, the Athanasian and Apostles' Creed, and the doxology "Glory to God in the highest." Some have attributed this little work to Rabanus Maurus, who is known to have been much concerned about the training of youth. Eccard, the editor of the book, refers it rather to Ottfried, a monk of Weissenberg, and scholar of Rabanus. But the reign of scholastic theology and the plague of superstition brought all labours of this kind to an end. It is only in flourishing periods of Christianity, that Christ's lambs are duly fed. Hence whenever any witnesses for the truth arose, they invariably turned their attention to catechetical instruction. Thus one of the crimes laid to the charge of the Waldenses, was that they gave instruction to one another. From the Catechism which the Waldenses presented to Francis I, King of France, in 1545, it appears that they had not neglected this branch of evangelical labour. The same proved true under John Wiclif, who set himself to make simple books of instruction for the poor people. John Huss, likewise, wrote a catechetical work, while he was in prison at Constance: it is to be found among his printed works, in the edition of 1715. It is no more than just to add that the great Gerson, chancellor of the University of Paris, not only wrote a treatise concerning "the drawing of babes to Christ," but spent much of his latter days in carrying his principles into practice.†

The Reformation in the sixteenth century was accompanied by the restitution of catechetical labour. Only a shadow of this instrumentality remained. It was to remedy the brutish ignorance of the German people, that Luther prepared his celebrated catechisms. Of these works we propose to speak more particularly in another place. "The wretched aspect of things," says he, "lately beheld by me in making a visitation, has impelled me to issue this catechism, composed with all brevity and plainness. Alas! what calamity did I then see! The common

* Buddeus, *Isagoge* p. 333.

† Buddeus, p. 334.

people, especially they who dwell in the country, are so void of knowledge, that it were a shame to tell of it."

Among many generous traits in the heroic Luther, few are more striking than his zeal for the training of the young. He seemed to be before his age, in discerning that on this depended the existence of Protestantism. In 1525 he issued an "Address to all the Magistrates and Common Councils in all cities of Germany, in behalf of Public Schools." The learned historian von Raumer says of this treatise: "Who can avoid being delighted, to become acquainted with this great man as the reformer of German education? His admonitions went to the hearts of innumerable Germans, roused sleeping consciences, and strengthened weak hands: his decisions had, both with princes and people, the cogency of God's own voice."* Some of Luther's rugged, earnest, mighty sentences, will not lose all their force, even in our imperfect translation.

"I entreat you all, therefore, dear masters and friends, on God's behalf, and on behalf of the poor youth, that you would not treat this matter so lightly, as many do, who see not the devices of the Prince of this world. For it is a serious and great affair, important to Christ and all the world, that we help and counsel the young. Dear masters, if one must spend so much yearly, on firelocks, roads, bridges, dams, and numberless like things, in order that a city have temporal peace and quietness, why should we not all the rather lay out as much on the poor youth, so as to have a few fit men for schoolmasters?" Is it not plain, that one can now in three years train a boy, so that in his fifteenth or eighteenth year, he shall know more than hitherto all universities and convents could do? Yea, what hath been learned hitherto in universities and convents, but to be asses, blocks and stocks? Twenty, even forty years have men learned in them, without knowing either Latin or German; to say nothing of the scandalous, vicious lives, whereby noble youth have there been so woefully corrupted."

"God's command by Moses presses and exacts the teaching of children by parents, so often, that in the 78th Psalm it is said: 'he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children, and to children's children.' And the

* Karl von Raumer, *Gesch. d. Paedagogik*, 1. 189.

fourth* commandment shows this also, where God so earnestly commands obedience to parents, that rebellious sons were to be judicially slain. And why indeed do we elder ones live, but that we may guard and teach and train the younger?" "Wo to the world, for ever more! Here are children daily born and growing up, and alas! there is none to take charge of the poor young generation; so things are suffered to go as they may." "How can even reason, and especially Christian love endure it, that children grow up among us, untutored, and are poison and vermin-eggs to other children, till at last a whole city is corrupted, as befell Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Gaba! In the second place, alas the great mass of parents is unfit for the work, and know not how children should be brought up. For they have learnt nothing themselves, but to care for appetite."

"Our schools," adds Luther, with a noble warmth, "are no longer a hell and a purgatory, in which we were tortured upon *Casualibus* and *Temporalibus*; in which moreover we learned nothing but mere nought, after all our thumping, quaking, anguish and woe. If people take all this time and pains to make their children play cards, sing and dance, why not as much time to teach them reading and other arts, when they are young and at leisure, and fit and cheerful for it? I speak for myself. If I had children, and could do so, I would make them learn not only languages and history, but singing and instrumental music, and all mathematics. For what were all this but child's play, in which the Greeks in old time trained their children, so that they came to be marvellously expert, and afterwards fit for everything? Yea, it grieves me now, that I did not read the poets and histories more, and that no man taught me them. In place of which I had to read the devil's filth, the philosophers and sophists, at great cost, toil, and hurt, so that now I have enough to do to get rid of it." And then speaking of the ignorance prevalent in his day, he breaks forth as follows: "therefore we have received what was due, and God has right well repaid our unthankfulness, in not prizing his goodness, and providing while it was yet time, and while it was possible, for the securing of good books and learned persons, and in letting it slip as not concerning us. So, on his part, God, instead of the Bible and

* Reckoned by us as the Fifth.

good books, suffered Aristotle and innumerable hurtful books to come in, which drew us further and further from the Bible. Besides this, were the devil-masks, friars, college-spectres, maintained at huge expense, with many doctors, preachers, masters, parsons, and monks, that is to say, great, gross, fat donkeys, decked with red and brown caps, like swine led by a chain of gold and pearls, and we have laden ourselves with these, who have taught us nothing good, but have made us more and more blind and sottish, and, in return, have devoured all our goods, and filled every cloister and every corner, with the ordure of their unsavoury, poisonous books; till to think thereon is horror!" These coarse but powerful passages will do more to show the zeal of Luther for religious education, than pages of dissertation could do.

It has already been said that the Reformation brought with it a revival of catechetical instruction, and mention has been made of the Catechisms of Luther. The origin and general character of these compositions belongs to our subject. They were preceded by some smaller works. The Reformation had scarcely dawned, before Luther perceived the importance of giving religious training to the young, after a regular form. As the result of popular discourses delivered in 1516 and 1517, the Reformer, printed, in 1518, an exposition of the Decalogue.* Two years after he set forth a similar book in German; the Lord's Prayer and Creed being added. And in a preface to his book on the German church-service, he wrote, in 1526: "First of all, we stand in need, for God's service in German, of a *rugged, plain, simple, good Catechism*. Catechism means an instruction, whereby Heathen, who mean to be Christians, may be taught and directed, what they are to believe, do, and know, in Christianity."

When the visitation of the churches, alluded to above, was made in 1527 and the years following, Luther was so convinced of the wretched ignorance of the parish priests, that in the latter part of 1528, he prepared a Catechism. "Just now," writes he, "I am busy, making a catechism for the rude pagans."† It was his intention to confine himself to the first and larger work,

* "Decem Præcepta predicata populo, per Mart. Luther." Vit. 1518. Opera, ed. Walch. tom. x. p. 182. s. 99.

† Letters, III. p. 417, 426.

but afterwards he thought it necessary to afford something more compendious. There has been some question as to the order of their appearance, but it is now well established that the larger one came first; and this is what might be judged from examining it, since it bears every mark of a first draught. Of our two Westminster Catechisms, on the other hand, it is well known, that the Shorter was first written. Both of Luther's were issued in 1529. Both were written by him in his peculiarly nervous German. They began to be extensively used, and good old Mathesius says more than a hundred thousand copies were circulating in the Latin and German schools: so that now they are always included among the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church. The two principal Latin versions were those of Lonicerus and Obsopoeus. The Larger Catechism fills about one hundred and thirty pages of large duodecimo. After a twofold preface, it is divided into six parts, under these heads; the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Baptism, and the Sacrament of the Altar (as he continued to call the Lord's Supper.)

Luther's Larger Catechism is not in the form of question and answer, but is a familiar and somewhat diffuse admonition to preachers and teachers, as to the way in which they should explain and inculcate the subjects above mentioned. Some of his sound and pungent sayings will give an idea of his plainness. These instructors, he says, had grown so conceited, and so cloyed with the simplicity of divine truth, that after reading over the catechism once, they were ready to throw it into a corner, as if they knew all about it; "a noxious and pestiferous evil." "Whereas I," he adds, "if I may speak of myself, though Doctor and preacher, and not less learned or experienced than those who thus presume, and who have come to so great assurance, am nowise ashamed to do as the boys do. For, as we teach them the Catechism, so do I, in the morning, or at any other spare time, say over to myself, word for word, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, some Psalms, &c."* "Wherefore," says he, "I do now once more entreat and conjure all Christians, but especially all pastors and preachers, not to seek to be Doctors before the time, nor falsely to persuade

* *Praef.* I. §. 6.

themselves that they know every thing. But if they use diligence, I solemnly promise them, and they shall themselves experience the same, that they shall thence derive great fruit, and that God will make superior men of them, so that they shall one day themselves confess, that the more they repeat and reiterate the doctrine of the Catechism, the less they apprehend and know it, but have need to be ever learning it."

Luther gives some directions as to the way in which the work of catechizing shall be conducted. Let the reader judge whether we do not find in them the germ of that household tree, which has borne such goodly fruit in the land of our Presbyterian forefathers. "The duty of the faithful and watchful father demands, that *once a week in the least*, he should make trial by examination of his children and family, and discover what they understand or have learnt; solemnly constraining them, in case of ignorance, to learn these things thoroughly."

The treatise (for such it is) abounds in those striking and memorable sayings, which characterize all Luther's writings, but especially those which are in German. The racy idioms often remind us of our own Bunyan: they are as strong, as witty, and as coarse. Writing as Luther did, to draw souls away from the gins and traps of popery, he loses no opportunity of detecting the Romish snares. "This (catechetical) way of education," says he, "so drives the roots into the heart, that children fear God more than they dread ferule or whip. And the reason I speak so simply is for the youth's sake, that the roots may at length penetrate their inmost mind. For when we teach children, we must prattle in their own tongue."* Speaking of the abuses of the Sabbath, he says: "Those indeed know full well how to keep holidays and festivals, who are very far from Christ and all piety; since we see all that hive, and idle luxurious throng of our religious orders, who stand daily in churches, chanting and trolling (*singen und klingen*) bawling and vociferating, and yet, with all their stentorian cry and lupine howling, keeping no Sabbath. For they neither teach nor practice any word of God, but express what is quite diverse and opposite, by both their doctrine and their life."

This larger Catechism of Luther well deserves our study. It

* Cat. Maj. P. I. §. 64.

was evidently written from a full mind and heart, and with a rapid pen. Being the first deliberate attempt, in this kind, of the Reformation era, it is not to be expected that it should be either so exhaustive or so succinct, as later productions. This will be manifest from a comparison of what relates to the Law, with the masterly exposition of the Decalogue, in our own Catechisms. The division of the Romanists is retained; so that our fourth commandment is Luther's third, and so on, to the tenth, which is numbered ninth and tenth. The view taken of the Sabbath is lower than that of British and American Protestants, being much the same with that of Calvin. The sign of the cross, in prayer, is commanded. And, in regard to the sacraments, those remnants of popish opinion are of course apparent, in regard to which Luther differed so signally from Calvin, and especially from Zwingli. But the work, as a whole, is a good and great work, and must ever be venerable as the first monument of catechetical Protestantism.

The SHORTER CATECHISM of Luther is in the form of question and answer. It is very simple, and so short as not to take up more than twenty pages, duodecimo. The order is as follows: I. The Decalogue. II. The Apostles' Creed; under three articles, 1. Of Creation, 2. Of Redemption, 3. Of Sanctification. III. The Lord's Prayer. IV. The Sacrament of Baptism. V. The Sacrament of the Altar. There are three appendixes; 1. Morning and Evening Prayers; 2. Grace before and after Meat; 3. Economic Maxims.

A specimen of the doctrinal part will scarcely fail to be acceptable; it relates to the second portion of the Creed, viz.: "And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord," etc.

"Q. What is the meaning of this article?

A. I believe that Jesus Christ, very God, eternally begotten of the Father, and very man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who redeemed me a lost and condemned human being [*hominem*] and freed me from all sins, from death, and from the power of Satan, not with silver and gold, but with his own holy and precious blood, and with his innocent passion and death, that I should be wholly his, and should live under him in his kingdom, and should serve him in perpetual righteousness, in-

nocence, and blessedness, as he himself rose from the dead, and liveth and reigneth forever. 'This is most certainly true.'**

The Economic Maxims, at the close, are under fourteen heads; of which all are simple texts of scripture, except the last. They relate to all relative duties. The closing one is a couplet, in three languages, Latin, German, and Greek:

“Cuique sit inprimis magnae sua lectio curae,
Ut domus officiis stet decorata suis.”

“Ein jeder lern sein Lection,
So wird es wol im Hause ston.”

“Let every one his lesson learn,
For this to household-good shall turn.”

In the preface to this Shorter Catechism, Luther is very urgent upon a point, which is essential to catechetical instruction, but which is in danger of being entirely neglected, in this day of supposed progress in education; namely, the importance of committing a set form to the memory.

“I therefore,” says he, “beseech and conjure all you, who are pastors and preachers, that you solemnly discharge your duty, and take care of the people committed to you by God. And this you will best do, by joining us in inculcating this catechism every where, and especially on the young. But if any of you are so unlearned, as to have no knowledge whatever of these things, let not such be ashamed, to read to their hearers this prescribed form, word for word, in this manner. First of all, let preachers beware how they set forth the decalogue, or the Lord's Prayer, or the Creed, or the Sacraments, sometimes in one way, and sometimes in another; but let them constantly use the same form, in the common propounding and explaining these things. And my reason for giving this advice is that I know that the simpler people and youth cannot be successfully taught, *except by one and the same form often proposed and repeated*. For if you present the same things, sometimes in one way and sometimes in another, the more simple minds are apt to be confused, and the result is, that all your pains in teaching goes for nothing.” “It is another affair, when you teach the gospel in an assembly of learned men; then you may give a specimen of your erudition; and I do not forbid your varying your mode of discussion, offering sometimes one and sometimes another as-

* Ed. Franke, p. 73.

pect in speaking. But with the more simple, always use the same form, set forth in certain words." "As I have said above, that the simple catechism is to be always taught in the same words, so I would desire, also, that in the explanation of the catechism, the same mode of treatment should be pursued, without altering a single syllable."

The principle contained in these directions is of great moment in all juvenile instruction. It is too commonly thought, that the point is gained with children, when they are known to *understand the matter for the time being*: and this fallacy is encouraged by the slovenly popular methods of abundant questions, to be answered in the pupil's own words. On the contrary, as the basis of every science, as a subject of teaching, is laid in concise and exact definitions; and as the language of these definitions cannot be altered without some loss; so the only safe method of beginning is to charge the memory of the learner with the very words of such definitions. This is equally true of syntax, geometry, physics, metaphysics, and theology. Those more diffuse and tentative methods which are good in the closet are out of place in the school; and the way of discovering truth is not always the way of inculcating it. All first-lines of instruction must proceed upon authority; the truth must be given as *dogma*. In a word, though we arrive at principles *analytically*, we teach them *synthetically*. Hence it is not a traditional but a most philosophic method, to demand the accurate learning by rote of catechetical forms. It is invariably found, that the best theologians are not those who have enjoyed the fullest cursory reading even of the best authors, but those who have enriched their memory with the most complete body of exact definitions.

In the churches of the Reformed, there was no less attention paid to the training of the young. Among their monuments, none is more venerable than the Catechism by John Calvin, commonly called the Geneva Catechism. This was set forth in French, in 1536, and in Latin, in 1538.* The Geneva edition of 1545 was revised by the author. It was followed by forms of prayer, both for private use, and for the church service: these may be seen appended to most old editions of the

* Augusti, Liber. Symb. Ecc. Ref. p. 647.

French New Testament. This Catechism obtained extraordinary diffusion, being publicly used in Switzerland, Holland, and to some extent for a time in Scotland and England.* Such was its value in France, that it was expounded in all the Reformed churches of that country, on Sunday afternoons, until the revocation of the Edict; and this by decrees of the great National Synods.† It was translated into almost all the modern languages of Europe, besides being put into Greek by Henry Stephanus, and into Hebrew by Tremellius.

The judgment of Calvin concerning the value of juvenile instruction, may be learnt from his famous letter to Somerset, and from his preface to the Catechism itself. "Let there besides," he writes to the Lord Protector of England, "be published a plain formula or catechism, for the use of children, and those who may be more ignorant among the people. Thus the truth will be rendered more familiar to them, and at the same time they will learn to distinguish it from impostures and corruptions, which are so apt to creep in by little and little upon the ignorant and careless. *It becomes you to be persuaded, that the church of God cannot be without a catechism*; for therein the true seed of doctrine is to be contained, from which at length the pure and seasonable harvest will be matured, and from this the seed may be multiplied abundantly. Wherefore, if you expect to build an edifice of this kind, which shall last long, and be safe from destruction, give all care that each child be instructed in the faith, by the catechism published for that purpose; that they may learn briefly, and as their capacities will admit, in what consists true Christianity. The usefulness of the catechism will not be confined merely to the instruction of children. The consequence will also be, that the people, being taught by it, will be better prepared to profit by the ordinary preaching of the word; and also if any one, puffed up, should introduce any new opinions, he may be detected by an immediate appeal to the rule of the Catechism."

In the Preface, Calvin uses language which may well seem prophetic to those who in this year of 1848, a little more than three centuries after the date of the Geneva Catechism, observe

* L'Enfant, Discours sur les Catechismes, p. 101, s. 99.

† Buddeus, Isagoge, p. 341.

the National Synod of the French Protestants repudiating the faith of their forefathers, and thus verifying the prediction of the Reformer.

“But if this is so needful now, what shall we say of posterity? On this subject I am so anxious, that I scarcely dare to think. *And O that our sons may not some day regard this rather as a vaticination, than a conjecture!* Whence we must give the more pains, to bind up in our writings, such remains of the church, as may survive us, or perhaps emerge into notice. Other sorts of writings may show, indeed, what the religious opinions of us all were; but the doctrinal agreement of our churches cannot be evinced by a more illustrious testimony, than that of Catechisms. For there will it appear, not merely what this or that man has taught, but what rudiments have been inculcated among us from boyhood, on all, whether learned or unlearned; all believers having this for a solemn symbol of Christian Communion. This indeed was my principal reason for setting forth this Catechism.”

A little after he adds in a characteristic passage: “Moreover I think it is becoming as an example, that it be testified to the world, that we, who endeavour the edification of the Church, should every where address ourselves faithfully to this, that the use of Catechizing, which some ages ago was abolished under the papacy, should now as it were be restored to its rights. For we can neither commend this holy institution according to its merits, nor sufficiently rebuke the flagitious popish corruptions, which by turning it into childish fooleries, not only did it away, but basely perverted it to a cloak for their own foul and impious superstition. For they observe no bounds, in adorning that adulterous Confirmation, which they have made to usurp its place, with a great meretricious splendour of ceremonies, and many deckings of pomp: but while they seek to adorn, they really bedeck it with execrable blasphemies, while they vaunt it as a sacrament worthier than Baptism, giving the name of *semi-Christians* to all who have been anointed with their unsavory oil: meanwhile their whole action comprises nothing but histrionic gesticulations, or rather the wanton tricks of monkeys.”*

* Augusti, p. 462.

The Address to the reader is in these words. "It was always an observance of the Church, and diligently provided for, that children should be duly trained in Christian doctrine. That this might be done more conveniently, not only were schools opened, of old time, and individuals ordered to instruct their respective families aright, but it was also matter of public injunction and practice, for children to be examined in churches, on each of the articles, which ought to be common and known among all Christians. That this might be orderly done, a formula was draughted, which was called the *Catechism*, or instruction. After that time, the devil, miserably lacerating the church of God, and bringing in horrid destruction, (the marks of which are even now too visible in most of the earth) overthrew this holy arrangement; nor did he leave anything in its place, but sundry trifles, engendering superstitions only, with no fruit of edification. Such is what they call *Confirmation*, fraught indeed with postures worse than laughable, quite befitting apes, and resting on no foundation. What therefore we here offer, is nothing else than the practice of those things, which from antiquity were observed by Christians and true worshippers of God, and which were never omitted, but while the Church was utterly corrupt."*

The starting point of the Geneva Catechism is the same as that of the Westminster, viz: "*What is the chief end of man's life?*" It proceeds then to develop the highest good of man—the knowledge and worship of God—in Jesus Christ—as set forth in the Apostles' Creed, which is then expounded. After this follow the Decalogue, and the Lord's Prayer. Then are treated the Scriptures, and the Sacraments. The plan of the work differs materially from the Catechisms with which we are familiar, and we cannot but think that the comparison is in favour of our own. The question is supposed to be asked by the teacher, and is in some instances longer than the answer; the question is not rehearsed in the answer; and the series of answers do not form a body, of connected propositions. For example: "*M. How then say you that we are justified by faith?*" *P.* Because, when with certain confidence of

* Augusti, p. 464.

heart, we embrace the promises of the gospel, we do, in a manner, obtain possession of this righteousness, of which I speak. *M. This is your meaning then, that the righteousness, as it is offered to us by God through the gospel, so it is received of us by faith?* *P.* So it is."

The exposition of the fourth commandment will serve more fully as a specimen, and will also show Calvin's doctrine of the Sabbath. "*M. Does he command to labour six days, that we may rest the seventh?*" *P.* Not simply: but giving six days to men's labours, he reserves the seventh, on which it is not permitted to labour.

M. Does he forbid all labour on one day of the week? *P.* This commandment has a peculiar consideration. For the observance of rest is part of the ceremonies of the old law. And for this cause it was abolished at the coming of Christ.

M. Say you that this commandment pertains properly to the Jews, and was given for the time of the Old Testament? *P.* Yes; so far as it is ceremonial.

M. Why? *Is there anything in it besides ceremony?* *P.* It was given for three reasons. *M. What are they?* *P.* To figure spiritual rest; for ecclesiastical polity; and for the relief of servants.

M. What is spiritual rest? *P.* It is to cease from our own works, that the Lord may work in us.

M. How is this accomplished? *P.* By mortifying our flesh, that is, renouncing our nature, in order that God may govern us by his Spirit. *M. Should this be done only on one day of the week?* *P.* It ought to be done continually; for when we have once begun, we must continue all our life.

M. Why then is there a certain day assigned to figure this? *P.* It is not required that the figure be in everything like the reality; it is enough that it have some resemblance.

M. Why is the seventh day ordained, rather than any other? *P.* The number seven, in scripture, denotes perfection. It is therefore proper to denote perpetuity. Thus it admonishes us that our spiritual rest is only begun in this present life, and will not be perfected until we depart from this world.

M. But what is the meaning of the reason here alleged by our Lord, that we must rest, as he has done? *P.* After having created all his works in six days, he dedicated the seventh to

the consideration of these. And to lead us the better to do this, he alleges his own example. For there is nothing so desirable, as to be conformed to him.

M. Must we always meditate on the works of God ; or is it enough to do so one day in the week ? *P.* It should be done every day ; but by reason of our infirmity, one day has been specially appointed. And this is the polity of which I spake.

M. What order then should be observed on this day ? *P.* People should assemble, to be instructed in the truth of God, to offer common prayers, and to render testimony to the faith and religion.

M. How do you understand this precept to be given for the relief of servants ? *P.* To give some relaxation to those who are under the power of others. And this equally subserves the common polity ; for each one accustoms himself to labour the rest of the time, seeing he has a day of rest.

M. Now tell us how this commandment addresses itself to us ? *P.* Touching the ceremony, it is abolished. For we have the accomplishment in Jesus Christ.

M. How ? *P.* Because our old man is crucified by the virtue of his death ; and because by his resurrection we rise to newness of life.

M. What remains of it then to us ? *P.* That we observe the order instituted in the church, for hearing the word of the Lord, joining in public prayers and sacraments, and that we do not contravene the spiritual polity which exists among believers.

M. And is the figure of no more use to us ? *P.* Nay, indeed : for we must return to its reality ; which is, that being true members of Christ, we cease from our own works that we may resign ourselves to his government."

In this extract we have followed the French, which differs considerably in point of expression from the conciser Latin. When we consider the time at which this catechism was made, and the generality of its reception, by means of which hundreds of thousands in many countries received from it the lessons of salvation ; and its exposition in all the French and Walloon churches, according to its division among the Sundays of the year ; we may justly rank this among the most impor-

tant works of the great Reformer, while we place it by the side of the analogous production of Martin Luther.

The example of Luther and Calvin was followed by many in both divisions of the Protestant body. On the Lutheran side, some proceeded to frame other catechisms, intended to amplify what was in the original, or to supply its defects; others expended labour in commenting more or less largely on the text. Among the former must be numbered Philip Melancthon, John Brentius, John Mathesius (so well known as the affectionate biographer of Luther), Nicholas Selnecker, David Chytraeus, John Wigand, and Nicholas Hemming. Indeed almost every state in Germany had its respective manual in which the catechism of Luther was enlarged and explained. The Gotha catechism, for example, was by Solomon Glassius: the Dantzic catechism, is noted by Abraham Calovius, and those of Dresden, Frankfort, and Quedlinburg, by Spener, who added to his other labours for Christ, a plain exposition of the Smaller Catechism; a work which Buddeus says is marked by his characteristic judgment. It is called by Mayer "an incomparable work," on account of its fulness and clearness, the solidity of the scripture proofs, and the tendency of the whole to promote vital piety in the learner; nothing less was to have been expected from one whom God employed as a chosen vessel for the revival of religion in a cold time. Wittenberg, Tübingen, and Leipsick had their several catechisms.*

Other works of catechetical form far transcended the ability of youth, and even rose to the level of theological systems. Such was that of Dietericus, entitled "Catechetical Institutes," often enlarged upon, in the way of lectures and annotations, by such men as Chemnitius and Bechmann. A similar book by Danhauer, entitled '*Catechetical Milk*,' has been thought to contain not only milk for babes, but strong meat for men. There were many who published sermons founded on the order of this little book of the Reformer. So that we may bless God that Luther was ever led to such a composition.

On the side of the Reformed, much was also done; as may be read in L'Enfant's work on Catechisms. All these were however eclipsed by one, which acquired an authority, still

* Buddeus, u. s. p. 335.

existing in our own day; this was the *Heidelberg Catechism*.

A little explanation will here be necessary. Among those countries in which the Calvinistic doctrines found great favour one of the most noted was the Palatinate. Under Frederick II., surnamed the Wise, and Otto Henry, the Magnanimous, that is, from 1544 to 1559, the Palatinate was Lutheran. But Frederick III., about the year 1560, introduced the Swiss reform, both in doctrine and worship. He was a pious and distinguished man.* He thought it of great importance to fix the opinions which he maintained, by comprehending them in a catechetical formula. For the preparation of this, he employed two eminent theologians, Zachary Ursinus, and Caspar Olevianus; who were aided, some say, by Boquin and Tremellius. Ursinus, of Breslau, who is to be carefully distinguished from a Lutheran divine of the same name, was a pupil of Melancthon, and was professor first at Heidelberg and then at Neustadt; he died in 1583. Olevianus became professor at Heidelberg in 1584, and was afterwards at Herborn; he wrote an Exposition of the Apostles Creed, and died in 1587. The labour of compiling the new work fell chiefly on Ursinus. When complete it was subjected to the clergy of the Palatinate, in 1562, and in 1563 was published with the sanction of the Elector Palatine. It is a singular fact, that his successor, Louis VI., who lived during the days of the celebrated 'Formula of Concord,' reverted to Lutheranism, and altered both creed and church-service, after the Lutheran pattern. After his death, in 1583, Calvinism was restored.† Guericke, the representative of old school Lutheranism, commends this work, for its warmth and ability, and its general richness of doctrine, but adds, that on the Lord's Supper, it contains the Calvinistic and in part even the Zwinglian doctrine, in most decisive expressions, and that it utters the Calvinistic dogma of Predestination only in an obscure manner.‡ The Heidelberg or Palatine Catechism, for it was known by both names, received respectful attention from many Lutherans, for its method, comprehensiveness, and general truth; but among the Reformed it quickly rose to the authority of a public symbol. Next to the second Helvetic Confession, it is supposed to have

* Hase, Kgschte. § 362. † Hase, Kgschte. § 362. ‡ Guericke, Kgschte, ed. 6. vol. iii. p. 553.

been the most valued and widely extended formula. It had currency not only in Germany, but in Hungary, Switzerland, and especially in Holland, from which it came with the Dutch emigration to America. Among the numerous men of learning who have written commentaries upon it, may be mentioned Ursinus himself, Pareus, Mylius, Cocceius, Momma, Alting, Leydecker, Hulsius, Becker, and Reuter. It was vehemently assaulted by Angelo de Monte Bello, of Louvain, and was defended against him by Henry Alting, of Groeningen, who also defended it against the Arminian objections of the Remonstrants.

The undeniable excellencies of the Heidelberg Catechism ensured it a final triumph, and in the seventeenth session of the Synod of Dort, it was approved by that body, and comprehended among the symbolical books of the Reformed Dutch Church. This was further confirmed in the Convention at the Hague, in 1651.* Among the Rules of Church Government, established in the Synod of Dort, the sixty-eighth is as follows: "Every minister shall, in the afternoon service on the Lord's day, briefly *explain* the system of the Christian doctrine comprehended in the *Catechism*, adopted by the Reformed Churches; so that, if practicable, the explanation may be annually completed, according to the sections made for that purpose in said catechism."† It is to be observed, that the Catechism is divided into portions for fifty-two Lord's days. While this rule was faithfully observed, it tended to produce that uniformity of orthodox belief which has been the glory of the Dutch churches; and it is much to be deplored, that in our large cities, this venerable usage has fallen somewhat into desuetude. Such importance was ascribed to catechetical instruction by the Reformed Churches, that it is expressly decreed by the last Synod of Dort, in its seventeenth session, that there should be observed a threefold method of catechizing: viz.

"1st, Domestic, by Parents.

"2d, Scholastic, by Schoolmasters.

"3d, Ecclesiastic, by Pastors, Elders, Readers, or Visitors of the sick.

"And that all whose duty it is to visit and inspect the

* Buddeus, *Isag.* p. 339, s. 99. † *Const. Ref. Dutch Ch.* ed. N. Y. 1815. p. 192.

churches and schools, shall be admonished to make this the first object of their care."

To carry this plan into effect, so far as respects the second method of instruction, there was made another decree, which comprises the following resolutions:

"1st. Schools for the education of children and youth shall be established wherever they may be found necessary.

2d. Provision shall be made for procuring and maintaining suitable teachers.

3d. The children of the poor must be provided for in these schools, or in others, expressly for them.

4th. No person shall be appointed to the charge of these schools, who is not a member of the Reformed church, furnished with testimonials of his orthodoxy and good morals, and who shall not previously have subscribed the Confession of Faith, the Belgic Catechism, and solemnly promised to instruct the children committed to his care, in the principles contained in the church standards.

5th. They shall, according to the age and capacity of the children, employ two half-days in every week, not only in hearing them repeat, but assisting them to understand their catechism; shall examine them frequently, inculcate upon them the necessity of regular attendance upon the ordinances of religion, accompany them to the ordinances, and promote their benefit from them.

6th. To promote fidelity in the teachers, and progress in the children, it shall be the duty of the pastors and elders, frequently to visit these schools, to direct and encourage the teachers in the method of catechising; to examine the children with mild severity, and to excite them to industry, by holy exhortations, by commendations, and with suitable rewards."*

It is our purpose, at some more convenient time, to revert to this subject of Catechetical History; and we shall probably then find occasion to discuss at greater length the origin and character of the great HEIDELBERG CATECHISM.

* Report to General Synod of R. D. C., 1809.

ART. IV.—*The Free Church Pulpit*, consisting of Discourses by the most eminent Divines of the Free Church of Scotland in three volumes. Robert Carter, 58 Canal Street. 1848.

THE power of true religion in influencing the minds of men has seldom, if ever, been more manifest than in that great multitude of people who relinquish all the comforts and advantages of the established church of Scotland, rather than submit to an authority attempted to be exercised by the civil government over the spiritual concerns of the church. This sacrifice, it is true, was principally made by the pastors of the churches, who were living in comfortable manses, and whose support was received from the funds of the established church; but in regard to the people, they subjected themselves to the burden of sustaining their ministers, and providing houses of worship, and manses for the comfortable accommodation of their pastors. Indeed, though the sacrifice at first was heaviest on the ministers and schoolmasters; yet eventually, the burden fell almost entirely on the people; for by their liberality, ministers and schoolmasters were made as comfortable as before the disruption. We are at a loss, whether most to admire the zeal and resolution which influenced such a multitude to relinquish their connection with the established church or their unanimity and liberality and energy, in carrying through their various *schemes* for the support and enlargement of the Free Church. During the last half century, there must have been a great revival of vital godliness in this portion of the Scottish church. This growth was gradual and silent, but real and extensive. There was, during this period, a return to the good old ways, which for a while had been partially forsaken by the most. Considering the evidence of the power of religion exhibited by the ministers, elders, and members of the Free Church, in this extraordinary event, we naturally feel a curiosity to know what was the character of the sermons preached by those pastors who took the lead in this remarkable exodus. With some of the leaders in this transaction, the Christian public had had the opportunity of knowing something; but in regard to much the greater number, we, in this country, enjoyed no opportunity of any acquaintance with them. It was, therefore, a matter of

real gratification to the American churches, when the Free Church thought proper to send a deputation of some of their best preachers, to solicit aid in accomplishing the great work which they had undertaken. And the impression made by the sermons delivered in our churches, by these distinguished men, was altogether favourable. The impression, indeed, was made on some minds, that, from these specimens, the preaching of the Scottish ministers, at least of the Free Church of Scotland, was superior to that of the preachers of any denomination, in this country. As a class, perhaps it may be true, that the pulpit of the Free Church is superior to that of any other body of Christians in the world. But we cannot form a correct general conclusion, on this point, from the sermons of a few persons. The deputies to this country from the Free Church of Scotland, were selected from their most distinguished men. And again, these men preached, no doubt, their very best sermons. A false inference is often drawn from a single sermon, prepared with great care, and delivered in favourable circumstances, of the usual discourses of the man. The sermons of no preacher are uniformly great; nor is the same sermon, preached on different occasions, equally popular and impressive. And some discourses which were almost universally admired, as delivered from the pulpit, when published are found to possess no extraordinary merit.

After hearing the brethren from Scotland, there arose, naturally, a curiosity to know how far their discourses might be considered a fair specimen of the Free Scottish pulpit. Beyond expectation, the opportunity is now afforded of fully gratifying this curiosity. In the volumes now under review, we have sermons from more than a hundred of those ministers who went out of the established church and formed the Free Church of Scotland. We have also a number of sermons, by ministers who have since joined the Free Church, or have been ordained by its presbyteries; whose sermons, in our judgment, are not inferior to those of their older brethren. The whole number of discourses is one hundred and sixty. In examining these discourses, we have been gratified to find, that almost universally they are truly evangelical and practical, and so perspicuous in style, that they are well adapted to the common reader.

Our next remark is, that in very few of them is there any

display of extraordinary talent, or marked originality. They appear to us to be generally free from that ambition of fine writing, into which some preachers in this country are apt to fall. These sermons appear to have been composed, not for publication, originally, but for the instruction and edification of common Christians. In general, they are more particularly addressed to the pious, than to the impenitent; and, in our judgment, they will be perused with pleasure and profit by serious people. It is difficult, however, to give a general character of compositions from the pens of considerably more than a hundred preachers; except as to their spiritual and evangelical character. Every preacher has something peculiar to himself, by which he is distinguished from all others. We must say, however, that few of these sermons, if brought to the test of the rules of criticism, would be judged to be complete. There is commonly a manifest defect in the exordium or introduction. In some of the sermons, there is nothing of the kind, but an abrupt commencement of the discussion of the subject. And where there is an exordium, it seems generally to have been composed with little care. We are aware, that there is an error on the other extreme. The introduction to some sermons is too elaborate, too figurative, too pathetic, or too splendid. Though it may excite admiration, yet it injures the effect of the more solid parts of the discourse. The expectation of the hearers is raised too high; and when these expectations are not realized in the sequel of the discourse, dissatisfaction if not disgust is apt to be produced. Such exordiums have been well compared to a very splendid vestibule to a plain building. As an example of such introductions, we would mention Saurin's sermons. Sometimes, indeed, this elegant preacher keeps up and continues the elevated feelings, excited by his exordium, through the whole discourse. But often this is not the case: and after a splendid proem, you have a dry doctrinal discussion; or if not dry, yet matter addressed entirely to the understanding. One of the very best preachers we ever had the opportunity of hearing, frequently had this fault; his exordium was always composed with care, and every word of it written; while, for the remainder of his sermon, he had only brief notes of the heads and principal ideas. A very deserving minister of another denomination, after hearing him several times, said, that when he listened to

his highly wrought and rhetorical introductions, he was charmed beyond expression; but when he came to the doctrinal discussions arising out of the text, there was a sensible falling off; and though well pleased in the main, the expectations excited in the beginning were painfully disappointed.

There may be occasions, indeed, in which no introduction is needed; and others, in which it may be proper to have an elaborate exordium, arising from the peculiar circumstances, or prejudices of the audience. But it should be remembered, that the main design of an exordium should be, to prepare the hearers for the body of the discourse. It should be simple and remarkably perspicuous, and at the same time interesting in a gentle degree; so that the sluggish minds of the hearers, should not, at the first, be taxed with an effort to understand what is said; and it should not be mere common-place, expressed in common phrases; but while what is said should command assent as soon as proposed, and should be sufficiently interesting to the feelings to command attention, it should not be adapted to make a strong impression, or to call forth lively admiration.

Another thing essential in a good exordium is, that while it avoids the anticipation of the matters to be discussed in the main subject of the discourse, it should have such a relation to it as to prepare the minds of the audience for the favourable reception of the main argument. Often the best introduction may be derived from the context; and at other times from some related truth not intended to be discussed. And where it is known, that strong prejudices are entertained by the hearers, it will be best not to attack them at once, but to obviate them indirectly, by a series of remarks which may serve as a foundation for their subversion. It is sometimes the case, that a preacher, when he appears before an audience, has suggested to him, by the very appearance of things, what is the suitable matter with which to make his first address to them. And though he may intend to read his sermon, this need not prevent him from availing himself of such suggestions as may be pertinent and seasonable. Every speaker must know, that much depends upon getting the thoughts and feelings of the audience at the commencement, in unison with his own and with the subject. When the confidence of the hearers is conciliated they can be led along with much ease. This however shows, that

not only is it important to have a good introduction, but that the preacher's mind be in a right state. Without right feelings in the speaker, it is vain to expect them in the audience.

The old Scotch method of sermonizing was, to make formal divisions, and then to abound in subdivisions; and to conclude with numerous uses, inferences, or practical reflexions. The sermons of the two Erskines may be taken as an excellent model of this method of distributing the several parts of a discourse. They were also fond of preaching many sermons from a single text; so that sometimes they would contrive to include a whole body of divinity in a series of discourses on one text. The excellent Mr. Derham, we recollect, has a whole volume of discourses on a single chapter. But the present race of Scotch preachers have entirely departed from the old method: they have, perhaps, verged too closely on the opposite extreme. Until we examined these volumes of sermons, by ministers of the Free Church, we had supposed, that the old method of formal divisions and subdivisions was retained by plain evangelical preachers in the country. But here we have sermons from more than a hundred preachers of that church; and scarcely one of them is cast in the ancient mould. Perhaps, in one fourth of the whole, the subject is distributed into heads, and these announced at the beginning; but in these the divisions are few, never exceeding four general heads, and commonly confined to two. But in the majority of these sermons, there is no formal division announced; after a brief exordium, the preacher draws from the text some prominent truth, on which he makes his remarks, and then proceeds to another point; and thus, through the whole discourse. And in some of the sermons there are no divisions of any kind marked, but the whole is a continued discourse on some one point, from the beginning to the end. An inquiry naturally arises here, which of these methods of sermonizing is best? The proper answer is, that each has its advantages and disadvantages. The same method is not suited to every subject, nor to every age. Formerly, when books were scarce, it was considered very important that the method of sermonizing should be such as to favour the memory. It was very customary for pious people to meet, after hearing a sermon, and repeat the discourse to one another: and from Mr. Baxter we learn, that ministers were accustomed to re-

peat their own sermons at private meetings, after delivering them in public. It was also a custom, not yet entirely obsolete, for parents to require their children and domestics, to give on the Sabbath evenings, an account of the sermon which they had heard during the day. It is evident, that the old method of arranging the subjects under general heads, and subdivisions greatly facilitated the memorizing of them; and if that were an object of importance now, the old method should be retained, or rather restored. But now, when good sermons in print so much abound, it seems scarcely necessary to tax the memory with the retention of all the sermons which are heard. So far as this custom serves to fix the attention of the hearers, which might otherwise wander, it is good; but experience teaches, that the intense exercise of memory tends to prevent the proper exercise of the feelings and emotions, which the truth ought to produce; and the main object of preaching is to excite the affections and lead to the resolutions, which correspond with the nature of evangelical truth. The philosophy of this fact of experience is plain enough; but we need not at present enter into it. The same is true in regard to taking notes of sermons which we hear, or writing them down in short hand; the attention required in catching the words of the speaker prevents all proper feeling at the moment. But if we do not get the right impression of the truth while hearing a sermon, we are not likely to receive it from the perusal of notes of the discourse afterwards. In our opinion, therefore, the best method of hearing any discourse is to hear the word completely unoccupied with extraneous circumstances, and entirely free and open to receive the impression which the truths delivered are calculated to make.

Often, when a preacher announces to his hearers certain heads, on each of which he intends to treat, they are prone to run before him and try to anticipate what he will say under each. And if he dwells long on one, they become uneasy lest the sermon should be unreasonably and inconveniently long. And sometimes, when the heads of a discourse are heard, the intelligent hearer is in possession of the whole; for the discussion turns out to be a mere expansion of the idea contained in the original proposition. This is the circumstance that renders some sermons, which are carefully composed and judiciously arranged as to method, uninteresting. The preacher

makes no allowance for the hearer's ability to think and infer; but explains too much, and spends time in explaining what is already perfectly understood.

Robert Hall, in an ordination sermon, has some very judicious remarks on the subject of announcing formally what the preacher intends to accomplish. Speakers in the senate and at the bar seldom pursue this method. Yet this method, though not usually necessary, is sometimes very proper; as when two or more distinct propositions are intended to be discussed, it is convenient to have this distinctly understood at the beginning. And sometimes, when a text furnishes several distinct heads, the preacher may find it expedient not to handle every one, but it may suit his purpose to take up only a part, or perhaps only one point, and direct his whole attention to that; in which case, it is proper to exhibit in a general division, all the truths contained in the text; and then to inform his audience, that it is not his intention to dwell upon the whole, but only a part.

When divisions are formally made, it is important that they should be few in number; should be evidently contained in the text; and should not interfere with one another. Truths taken for granted or implied in a text, should be taken for granted by the preacher; or briefly exhibited by way of introduction. If the preacher wishes to dwell on such points, let him select an appropriate text, in which these matters are evidently introduced. Writers on rhetoric have insisted much on the importance of *unity* in public discourses; one rule of division, therefore is, not to make such a distribution of a subject as to require the discussion of things entirely diverse. This is a principle of common sense. When men speak they should aim at some definite object, to make some particular impression, or to persuade to some particular course of conduct. But the observance of this rule ought not to prevent the preacher from introducing any truths which he may judge useful and necessary to his people. Indeed the rule is less applicable to didactic discourses than is commonly supposed. Here the object is to communicate instruction, and though too much ought not to be attempted at once, yet, surely, no teacher ought to confine himself to a single point, when his hearers may stand in absolute need of knowing many other matters. He must not keep back truths which they must know or perish, or he will be responsible for the loss of

their souls. The great rule of the gospel preacher is, to bring forth to the people, whenever he addresses them, all the truths which he thinks will be most conducive to their edification and salvation; and if this ever comes in collision with the artificial rules of the teachers of eloquence, he must disregard them, as Paul did.

Enough has been said on the subject of method in sermonizing; it is more important to remark, that while the sermons, under consideration are not composed in accordance with the old model, as to method and formal divisions, they do conform in spirit and substance to the sermons of the best Scottish preachers, in the best time of the history of the Church of Scotland. These sermons possess very different degrees of merit; but it may be said of them, in general, that while they are strictly orthodox in doctrine, according to the Westminster Confession, they are spiritual and practical, and recognise constantly, the reality and necessity of the work of grace on the heart; and many of them describe accurately the exercises of the renewed heart, and exhibit clearly the privileges and consolations which are the heritage of true believers. We have been much gratified to observe that the views of these preachers, both as it relates to the doctrines of the gospel, and the interior life of the genuine Christian, his aspirations, imperfections, conflicts, temptations, and prevailing desires and purposes, do, in all respects, agree with the opinions and sentiments of the Presbyterian Church in America. The aim of the writers appears, evidently, to have been, to do good. There is no display—no straining after originality—no highly wrought pictures of the imagination—no undue refinement adapted to a fastidious taste—no affectation of classical learning—no strokes of satirical wit, and little or no controversy. You would scarcely know from these discourses, that any theological errors existed; or, that the whole world were not of the same mind in religion. There is not any where, that we have observed, any allusion to the “new divinity,” which has found its way into some sections of the Scottish Church; but we may infer from these sermons, that these new notions have not, to any considerable degree, agitated the great body of the Free Church congregations; or among so many sermons, there would have been some allusion to the fact.

We know that these new opinions, imported from America, have occasioned considerable excitement and agitation in what was until lately the United Secession Church. And we have read an account of a formal trial of a distinguished professor of theology, for holding or favouring the "new divinity." The only discourses in the number which manifest any thing of a controversial spirit, are one or two, which are directed against the Roman hierarchy.

As these sermons appear not to have been composed with a view to publication, but were originally intended for the edification of plain Christians, they contain scarcely any abstruse discussion on the different points of the Calvinistic system; but these doctrines are every where assumed as true, and a practical use made of them.

One thing rather surprised us, namely, that among so many discourses, so few are adapted to the conviction of impenitent sinners. And there is less notice taken of mere formalists and false professors than might have been expected, in so great a number of discourses. That must be a happy state of the church in which there is no occasion to warn the people against infidelity and error. It is admitted by all teachers of homiletics, that the conclusion of a sermon is commonly its most important part, as it is intended to fix on the mind and the heart the convictions and impressions which the discourse is intended to produce. Too often, however, even when the body of the discourse is well arranged and carefully composed, the peroration is left to take care of itself. The consequence is, that the preacher who pursues this course, is apt to fall into a tiresome repetition of what has before been said; or he sallies forth in a strain of exhortation, which often has no coherence with the preceding discourse, and is apt to degenerate into mere rant. The preacher, dissatisfied perhaps that he has succeeded so poorly in gaining the attention of his hearers, or making any sensible impression on their feelings, in the body of his sermon, makes, at the close, a great effort, by vociferation and violence of gesticulation to accomplish his purpose; and though some weak minds may be affected by such means, the more intelligent and judicious will go away dissatisfied, and often disgusted. If indeed a preacher happen to be in a good state of feeling, at the close of the doctrinal discussion, he may make a

more effective peroration, than he could have composed in his study; but as such a frame of mind cannot be safely calculated on, it is best to compose the *improvement* or practical application of his discourse with care; and if he at the moment should be enabled to bring forth something more suitable, and more impressive, very well. Whether a conclusion by instructive inferences, or by pungent and direct exhortation, be most edifying, will depend on a variety of circumstances. In a regular series of sermons to the same audience, the former is commonly most for edification; but on particular occasions, or when the people are somewhat excited, the latter is best. The judicious preacher will not confine himself to any one method of commencing or closing his sermons; but will be guided by the subject, and the circumstances of the people. In drawing out inferences, some judgment is required. Some preachers have nothing in their application, but what was clearly taught in the sermon: but inferences while they naturally flow from the subject discussed, must not contain the same ideas. Some eminent preachers have made their statement of doctrine brief, and have made up the larger part of their discourses, by instructive inferences.

We have been much disappointed in finding so little pains and labour, in the application of the sermons under review. What is said is commonly very good and very appropriate, but commonly it is very brief; sometimes only a few sentences. We cannot but think that this is a greater defect than the want of an exordium. Many of these discourses are sound, spiritual, and evangelical; but they are defective in the conclusion; and yet the subjects treated commonly furnish abundant matter for instructive or impressive applications.

Thirty-four of these discourses are, in the Scottish style, called *lectures*; by which they mean expository discourses, on a considerable portion of scripture. This is an excellent method of preaching, and possesses many advantages over the method of preaching from an isolated text; as it naturally brings up a great variety of subjects, which could scarcely be introduced into a regular sermon. And it brings the people to a better acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, than the common method of preaching. The Scotch ministers ought to excel in this species of instruction; for we believe that it is a rule, at least a

custom, that of the two discourses delivered on the Sabbath, the one should be expository. We do not know why these discourses are termed *lectures* : in England and New England, any sermon preached out of the common routine is called a *lecture* ; the Scotch meaning of the term is, however, well understood in our churches.

It was our purpose to have given an analysis of some of the ablest sermons in this collection ; but it would seem invidious to select a few, where there are so many of real excellence. And it is unnecessary, since Mr. Carter, our enterprising religious bookseller, has published a handsome edition of these volumes, where they can be had at a moderate price. Instead, therefore, of furnishing our readers with the analysis at first intended, or with specimens of the sermons, we would recommend to them to obtain the work : it will be a rich treasure for any family. While the fondness for variety will be abundantly gratified by the different style and manner of discussing religious subjects, confidence may be felt, that in all of the sermons in the collection evangelical truth will be found, with such a practical tendency, as cannot but be both pleasing and edifying to the pious mind. We do therefore cordially recommend the whole work, as furnishing a rich addition to our stock of printed sermons.

But as some of our readers may wish to know the names of some of the authors, we will subjoin a list of the names of a few who are best known in this country, with the general subject of their discourses. The first sermon is from the pen of the Rev. James Sieveright, lately a moderator of the General Assembly. His subject is, "The Freedom of Gospel Worship from Social Circumstances and National Peculiarities, asserted." (Text, John iv. 24.)

The second sermon is from the Rev. Dr. James Brewster—"The Consolations and Sufferings of the Believer, and their effects on his Character." (1 Pet. v. 10.)

"Moses a Type of Christ." By the Rev. John Forbes, D.D., LL.D. (Deut. iii. 17, 18.)

"Lot's Flight from Sodom." By the late Rev. Robert Jeffrey. (Gen. xix. 15-17.) Note. This zealous and indefatigable man, who laboured so successfully for the interests of the Free Church, ordered this sermon to be sent to the publishers of the

Free Church Pulpit, only half an hour before his death. And among his last words, were "I feel my affection increasing for the GLORIOUS CAUSE, which is the cause of God.

"The love of the Father." By the Rev. Andrew A. Bonar. John vi. 36—40.

"The consolations of Christ adapted to the state and condition of his people." By the Rev. Robert S. Candlish, D.D.

"Duty of Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem." Psalms cxxii. 6. By the Rev. Thomas Brown, D.D. (Preached at the opening of the General Assembly, May 16, 1844.)

"Reasons why men reject the righteousness of God." (Rom. x. 1—9.) By the Rev. James Hamilton of London.

"Religious Divisions." By the Rev. Andrew Grey, D.D. (Luke xii. 51.)

"Christ our High Priest." By the Rev. Horatius Bonar. (Exod. xxiii. 36—38.)

"On Goodness." (Acts xi. 24.) By the Rev. P. McFarlan, D.D.

"The Church and the World." (Dan. ii. 31—35.) By the Rev. Duncan McFarland, D.D.

"Isaiah's Vision of Christ's Glory." (Is. vi.) By the Rev. J. J. Bonar.

"The Excellency of Christian Knowledge." (Phil. iii. 8.) By the Rev. James Buchanan, D.D.

"The Necessity of testifying Repentance towards God, to the faithful preaching of the Gospel." (Acts xx. 21.) By the Rev. W. A. Thompson.

"Spiritual Death and Life." By the Rev. William Mackenzie. (Ephes. ii. 1.)

"The duty of Examining the signs of the Times." (Is. xv. 15.) By the Rev. Robert Buchanan, D.D.

"The character of Christ as the Shepherd of Israel." By the Rev. Robert Elder.

"The Nature of Prayer; the Answer of Prayer; and the Encouragement to Prayer." By the Rev. W. M. Hetherington, LL.D.

"The Blessedness of the Believer." By the late Rev. David Welch, D.D.

"The Intercession of Christ." By the late Rev. Henry Duncan, D.D.

"Jesus the only Saviour." By the Rev. James Begg, D.D.

"The soul sorrow of Jesus." By the Rev. J. Macnaughten.

"Self-evidencing Power of the Gospel." By the Rev. George Lewis.

"Christ's Death Effectual for the Salvation of the Elect only." By the Rev. Henry Moncreiff.

"Importunate Prayer," by the Rev. Robert Smith.

"Regeneration." By the late James Somerville, D.D.

"Conversion of Paul." By the Rev. James Ferguson, of London.

The reference to these sermons is not so much on account of their superior excellency, as because of the authors of most of them we have some knowledge. We have not, indeed, attempted any comparison of the sermons in this collection : such a comparison could not easily be made ; for while one preacher excels in one respect, he is surpassed in some other respect by other preachers. Besides, comparisons of this kind, between the sermons of living preachers are often unjust, and always invidious. That sermon which is best to one, is not so to every body ; tastes differ, and peculiar circumstances give a suitableness and efficacy to truths presented in a particular manner, to some hearers or readers, when the same truths are not peculiarly adapted to the condition and feelings of others. Besides, the efficacy of preaching does not depend on the wisdom or eloquence of the preacher, but on the special blessing of God. Paul may plant and Apollos water, but it is God who giveth the increase. Sermons remarkably adapted to the gratification of a refined taste, are on that very account, not the best suited for edification ; for it is a principle in the philosophy of the mind, that two different objects cannot be accomplished at one and the same time ; if edification be our object, it must be our only one. In our opinion, excellence in preaching the gospel is the most important gift which any man can possess, and the attainment of it should call into requisition all the powers and exertions of the human mind.

To be a good preacher the man must possess, in the first place, a vigorous, well-balanced, and well-disciplined mind. He must possess a good degree of quickness of apprehension ; but especially, a sound, discriminating judgment ; a retentive memory, not so much of words as of ideas in their just connexion in a discourse. The power of logical reasoning is also ne-

cessary; false or sophistical reasoning in the pulpit is disgraceful and injurious to the truth. Even truth itself must not be corroborated by illogical arguments. The mind must be trained to a just and fair method of investigation; in which nothing is assumed as true, which is not self-evident, or capable of clear demonstration; and in which facts are stated with perfect candor and honesty. The imagination is of great importance to the preacher. We mean a fertile imagination, chastened and regulated by a sound judgment and correct taste. But a lively susceptibility of emotion is absolutely necessary to an impressive speaker. If we would make others feel, we must feel ourselves. It is feeling alone which can communicate the proper tones to the human voice; and when these are heard the very feeling which produced them is by a mysterious sympathy transferred into the minds of our hearers. Some speakers, indeed, possess far more melodious and expressive voices than others, but any voice which derives its tones from genuine feeling, however harsh, will be impressive. These natural tones may be artificially imitated; but the difference between the reality and the artificial imitation, is like that between the substance and the shadow. It may be objected, that the actors, who represent fictitious scenes, are able by their imitations of the proper expression of the passions, to affect their audiences in a very sensible degree. This is true; but all successful actors on the stage, produce the effect on their hearers, not by *imitating* the tones of feeling, but by exciting in themselves the feeling itself; otherwise, they could never succeed in producing the impression which they make on the feelings of the audience.

We once had the opportunity of hearing a very celebrated orator defending a man who had shot through the breast a neighbor in open day. We were curious to ascertain whether his effective oratory was a mere affectation of feeling, or whether he really felt what he said. The very first sentences which he uttered, convinced us irresistibly that his feeling was real and strong, and that he so made the case of his client his own, as to enter into all the emotions of his heart.

Various and extensive knowledge is also requisite to excellence in preaching. Every kind of learning is valuable to the public teacher of religion. The preacher should be able to bring out of his treasure things new and old. Knowledge

enlarges the mind and divests it of the prejudices, which are so apt to be imbibed by those whose views are circumscribed. The natural and physical sciences are really a part of natural theology, by which we read the divine attributes as exhibited in the book of nature. Astronomy is a noble science and agrees well with the studies and pursuits of the preacher. Geography and geology too, as relating to the globe on which we live, should not be neglected; and as the facts revealed by the latter seem, at first view, to conflict with the chronology of the Bible; every preacher should be able to obviate any objections which may arise from this quarter. The structure of the human body, and constitution of the human mind should be well understood by one who undertakes to enlighten the minds of others. And as to moral science, its fundamental principles form the basis of theology. A comprehensive knowledge of history is absolutely necessary to him, who would form just notions of the true character of man, and of the dispensations of divine Providence. But all the talents, knowledge, and mental discipline mentioned above, are not sufficient to make a good preacher, without genuine and lively piety. Even Cicero, a heathen, required that an orator should be a good man. But Cicero knew nothing of the scripture doctrine of divine influence. Every preacher should not only be a converted man, but his heart should glow with zeal for the glory of his Master, and should be warm with tender compassion for his fellow creatures. The pulpit is often spoken of, as though it were merely a theatre on which talent, taste, and learning, might be displayed to the admiration of a multitude of hearers. But, woe to the preacher, who ascends the sacred desk with such views as these. A double damnation will certainly be his doom, for he will not only be responsible for his own soul, but for those of his hearers, who perish through his neglect. The pulpit is an awful ordeal of a man's true character. If pride and ambition be predominant, here it will in all probability be manifested. There is no spot on the face of the earth, where Satan spreads his wiles, and plays off his stratagems more successfully than in the pulpit. He endeavours first to puff up; or, failing in this, he endeavours to cast the preacher down into discouragement. It will be one sign of the approach of the latter day glory, when the gift of preaching shall be granted, in an eminent degree, to many ministers. When

men like Paul, like Augustine, like Luther, like Whitefield, shall not appear as single stars in the firmament of the church; but brilliant constellation after constellation, shall arise and shine on Zion. Then the pulpit will be completely redeemed from the contempt into which it has fallen in many places. Then will Zion arise and shine, for the glory of the Lord will have arisen upon her. Then it will be manifest that the glorious Personage, seen in vision by the apostle John, is actually walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and holding the stars in his right hand.

These are not fancied scenes, the time will come when many burning and shining lights shall arise; when preachers like Whitefield, without Whitefield's faults—shall fly like a flame of fire through the earth, publishing glad tidings to all people. Then it may be said with emphasis, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion THY GOD REIGNETH."

ART. V.—*Divine Providence: or the Three Cycles of Revelation, showing the parallelism of the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian dispensations. Being a new evidence of the Divine origin of Christianity.* By the Rev. George Croly, LL. D. London: James Duncan. 1834. pp. 627.

DOCTOR CROLY is well known to our readers as a gentleman of fine literary taste. He takes high rank as a writer both in poetry and prose; and has evinced his correct taste in a judicious selection of the British poets. In the department of history, he has written a life of George IV., with a memoir of his times; and in theology he has published among other works, a treatise of high character on the Apocalypse, and the work which we have placed at the head of this article. This volume is altogether unique in its character, and differs in its design and execution from any work that we remember to have seen. It is an elaborate treatise to prove the divine origin of Christianity, by showing a resemblance between the three dispensations—the Patri-

archal, Jewish, and Christian; and is characterized by profound thought, extensive reading, and literary ability. We award him the meed of honour which is justly his due on these accounts—while we confess that we differ from him in many of his premises, and are compelled to decline his conclusions.

The divine origin of Christianity is susceptible of proof infinitely various in kind and degree, and having withstood the assaults of its bitterest opponents, has gathered around it an array of evidence which it will be found exceedingly difficult to meet, and altogether impossible to overthrow. Every attempt to throw additional light upon this subject, has only tended to show how strong are its foundations; and even where the attempt has been weak and imperfect, infidelity has had no cause for triumph. It is, however to be regretted, that any effort should be made to sustain the divine origin of Christianity on insufficient grounds. Christianity can lose nothing by a full and free discussion of its claim; but it may be injured in the estimation of many thoughtful minds, by arguments based upon insufficient premises, or weak, and inconclusive in themselves. And while we hail with pleasure each successful attempt to prove Christianity true—not because it really needs such proof, but because it strengthens our own faith, and tends to convince the public,—we deprecate each attempt to prove it where the evidence is either inconclusive or doubtful. We cannot avoid the conclusion that Dr. Croly's work will prove of no benefit to the cause of Christianity by carrying conviction to the minds of the sceptical. It is interesting and instructive, but it is fanciful. It contains much rich and valuable information; but it is built upon a mere supposition, and as an argument is therefore of very little worth. It is, we believe, universally allowed, in Christendom, that the world may be, thus far, divided into three grand divisions of time, the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian. These three divisions or cycles of time, bear, in some respects, an analogy to each other, so as to exhibit a sameness of dealing on the part of God in them all. It is admitted also that what were termed the types of the Mosaic law—must be fulfilled in the subsequent dispensation. This our Lord repeatedly asserts. But He no where asserts that every feature of the Mosaic dispensation through all its history—was to be a type of something in the Christian; nor that it was

typified by some event or individual in that which preceded. We find no allusion to such an idea throughout the scriptures. That Adam was a type in some particular, of our Lord, is stated; but that Abraham was, that Enoch was, that Jacob and Joseph were; that their descendants typified the Christian world in such wise as that each person and event live over again in some other person or event,—the history of the past re-acted in the present,—we find no assurance and no testimony. It is upon this supposition that Dr. Croly has prepared his volume, and in endeavouring to maintain which, he has, as we think, signally failed. It would be easy to show an identity, or rather a resemblance in some respects, between three or even more eras of the world, but when it is undertaken to prove that Christianity is divine because the three or more dispensations are alike, we may reasonably ask for more light than we have hitherto been favoured with, or than Dr. Croly has thrown upon it in his volume. Could it be shown, beyond a question, that each succeeding dispensation was typified most accurately member to member by that which preceded it, no doubt could assail the most sceptical mind of the divine origin of each, and of God's providence over the whole. This Dr. Croly has attempted to do, and we think, has failed in the attempt, partly from the nature of the case, and partly from his having drawn largely on his imagination. What he proposed to do in this volume, we will let him tell in his own way.

"The most capable argument hitherto offered, is undoubtedly that arising from the consecutive nature of the three dispensations; for all that we can require for the truth of Christianity is, to prove that it has been the work of God. That fact once ascertained, its doctrines and promises must be received as they are given. But the succession of the three requires so much chastised and calm inquiry, which the indolence of scepticism will not undertake; and so much clearing away of matters originating solely in local circumstances, of which its prejudice is glad to take advantage; that hitherto few arguments have been less practically effectual.

"The argument proposed in the present volume differs from all that have preceded it, much in principle and totally in form. Its object is to prove that 'Christianity is the direct work of Providence;' and this, not by any mere probability arising from its

original weakness and subsequent power, nor from its moral superiority; nor from the sufferings undergone by sincere minds in its cause; nor even from its prophetic testimonies; but from the comparison of facts acknowledged by all, without reference to religious opinion. It will be shown that the leading facts of Christian history, have been the leading facts of the two former dispensations, Judaism and the Patriarchal religion; and that these facts have occurred in the three not merely in essence, but with the same purpose, and in the same order; yet that no mere dry sequence has been observed in the order of the respective dispensations, but they have received in each, those slight variations of shape and colour, which exhibit a superior adapting hand, varying the process, but distinctly preserving the principle.

"These facts in the Patriarchal dispensation were—that man first remained for a certain period in a state of which little more is known than that he existed—that he then became the father of two sons—that they offered sacrifices, of which one was rejected, and the other received—that the elder slew the younger, was deprived of his inheritance and exiled forever—that a third son was born to supply the place of the slain brother, that he became the founder of a sacred line—that his descendants grew corrupt—that they were swept away by a great, direct act of divine justice—that a remnant who had adhered to virtue, were preserved by the divine interposition—that from a state of suffering and desolation they were suddenly raised into a boundless dominion, and became the regenerators of the world—that a new apostacy arose,—grew singularly powerful, crushed the pure family of the patriarchal house, and finally, was in turn crushed by a direct interposition of Heaven. It will be shown that all these facts have been gone through *twice* subsequently, in the Jewish and Christian eras, with attendant circumstances, proving that Providence continued to exercise a constant provision for their performance, and for their suitability to the necessary changes arising from three states of mankind so totally distinct as those of the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian world."*

There are minds singularly gifted with the faculty of tracing out resemblances and analogies, and we do not question that

* Preface, p. x. xii.

there are very striking analogies between these three eras, nor yet that there are as striking between more than these. It is not our object to show that there are no such analogies, for this no candid mind would undertake to show; but that there are not such parallelisms as Dr. Croly contends for; that many of his supposed resemblances are more imaginary than real; and that he has rested upon insufficient grounds the truth of Christianity. If, indeed, his only object was to prove that the Providence of God presided over the three dispensations—we have no objections to this, and it can be easily proved. But when he undertakes to show, on the strength of certain analogies, that the one is the counterpart of the others, and that the minutest events of the one dispensation, are daguerreotyped upon the succeeding one—to re-appear in newer forms, and with fresher colouring, we feel disposed to ask, if, in the New Testament, there is the slightest allusion to this? If our Lord, or any of the New Testament writers ever refer to its likelihood? Or if we have the most distant intimations of such parallelism? And then, if the same or similar resemblances cannot be formed in other periods or cycles in the history of the world, or even in the history of any single nation? We feel persuaded that it can; and if so, where is the specific argument for Christianity drawn from this source? and when drawn, what is its worth? The argument for the Providence of God is one thing; the argument for Christianity is another.

“If three such series are established, maintaining this broad, plain, and unbroken parallelism with each other, it is utterly impossible to conceive that chance has had anything to do with the subject.”*

This we admit, but this is not proving that Christianity is divine. The divinity of Christianity is a fact susceptible of proof; as much a fact, and as much susceptible of proof as any other fact. The simple question is, is the kind of proof adduced in this particular instance, any actual support to Christianity as a system of religion? Chance has had nothing to do with a thousand occurrences upon our world, but it would not hence follow that they were divine. It was not chance that originated Mohammedism, and the French Revolution, but it would be

difficult, we apprehend, to show that God is their author; much less, that they can claim an origin as divine as that of Christianity. It is a fault of some minds, that seizing analogies, they never know when to stop, but push them to the most unwarranted lengths. It is a beautiful idea, that there are three dispensations all parallel, and copies one of the other; but in the absence of any scriptural proof we do not see why these three should be parallel rather than some others. They constitute of themselves three great cycles of the world's history,—but this does not present sufficient ground for a parallel which is meant to prove Christianity in its details, divine; because a similar parallel can be traced throughout other portions of the history of our world. If the scriptures gave the slightest intimation of such a thing, we would bow implicitly to their revelation. But when, on the contrary, no such intimation is given, but the appeal is to “the law and the prophets,” we can but object to a theory, which, however laudable and pious the design, lays Christianity open to attack from the insufficiency of its principles, and the consequent inconclusiveness of its arguments. To show how far this theory is pushed, we make one more extract from the author's preface.

“It will be found, that not merely the nature and order of the leading facts in the three dispensations are exactly the same, but that the individual characters of the leading men and nations are the same; that individuals born two thousand years, and whole empires, asunder, have had precisely the same part in the several series; with the same character of mind, the same successes, and reverses; that Joseph in Egypt and St. Paul in Greece, that Ezra in Judea, and Luther in Germany, that Alexander in Asia, and Napoleon in Europe, have especially been the direct providential agents in the same departments of their series, and that among all the natural distinctions of country, objects, ability, and creed, they have been preserved in a singular adherence to the great predominating principle, of effecting the purposes of Heaven in the service of its revelation.” *

We apprehend that Dr. Croly has by a strange oversight, committed a palpable mistake in this argument, confounding two things which ought to be kept essentially distinct. No one

* Preface p, xiii.

doubts that Providence has framed and organized the dispensation under which we live at this present time. To prove a parallel, therefore, between this dispensation, and those which preceded it, would only go to prove that there was a guiding and over-ruling Providence over all. But this no more proves Christianity as a system of doctrine to be true, than it proves Mohammedism to be true; because as we have said, similar analogies may be traced between previous cycles, and that of Mohammed. If parallels are proofs, then it will be difficult to show why the proof is not as good for one as for another. To establish his point, he ought to show that the same leading doctrines were taught under all the dispensations. But, now the facts that Alexander was in Egypt, and did many things there, and that Napoleon was in Egypt, and did similar things there, can prove Christianity to be divine, we confess ourselves at a loss to understand. And yet Dr. Croly makes the parallel between Alexander and Napoleon to constitute an important link in his chain of proof.

“From the fall of the Babylonian empire (about B. C. 538,) to the Asiatic conquests of Alexander, Jerusalem was in the hands of the Persian emperor. It is with regret that the writer feels himself limited to a mere outline of the extraordinary, yet exact connection subsisting at this interesting period between the Jewish and Christian series. Nor must the reader be startled at the novelty of discovering the Persian empire to have taken its place in the providential system, as the prototype of Germany; Greece of France; and the founder of the brilliant and brief Macedonian empire, to have filled to the ancient world, the characteristic place and successes of the founder of the most dazzling and short-lived empire of modern days.”*

Dr. Croly's mind is of a highly imaginative cast, and while it is no cause for wonder that he should see resemblances and parallels in history, the liability with him is to cause these parallels to assume the form of type and anti-type. There is no more difficult question, probably, than what constitutes a type? By general consent, the word is applied almost exclusively, to those designed resemblances which are stated in the scriptures to have existed between persons and things in the

* Chap. xlix. p. 591.

Jewish on the one hand, and the Christian dispensation on the other. Any two persons or things, therefore, in which we fancy we see a resemblance, can hardly be ranked as type and prototype. The instances are very few indeed, in which, in the New Testament, the events and persons of the old are spoken of as types, and it is doubtful whether we are at liberty to constitute any thing or person a type of another, simply because we find some singular resemblance between them. This imaginative cast of mind, has, we apprehend, led the author into some liberties with his subject which contribute to mar his work, and to spoil his theory. The first cycle he makes to begin with the creation—more properly with Adam—and to end with “the confusion of tongues.” The second cycle he carries forward from “the call of Abraham,” to the establishment of the Christian Church, through Constantine. Then, to make his third cycle, instead of taking up the second cycle where he made it end, he goes back to the time of Christ who certainly was before Constantine, and endeavours to run a parallel between Adam and Christ.* But he has already run the parallel between Christianity and the former dispensations,† when making out the analogy in his second cycles. We are at a loss to conceive how he can go back over that cycle, and take out such events as he deems best, to run a parallel for this third period.

But this is only one instance of poetic license. He has given us others quite as extraordinary. With regard to one of these we will allow him to speak for himself. Under the head of “The Ante-diluvian patriarchs,” he says:

“It will be shown that a direct connection, an exact and unbroken parallelism, is maintained between the patriarchal period from Seth to Abraham, and the periods of the Jewish and Christian history; that not merely the periods retain an exact coincidence, but that even the *names* of the Patriarchs are descriptive of the *character* of the corresponding periods in the Jewish annals; and, in fact, that the whole of the ante-diluvian and post-diluvian record, down to the calling of Abraham, is not merely a history in the proper sense of the word, but also an actual series of prophecy.”‡

He then takes the Patriarchal generation from Seth to Noah,

* Chap. xliv. p. 436.

† Chap. xxxviii. p. 473.

‡ Chap. xvi. p. 228.

and with the interpretation of each patriarchal name, endeavours to discover a resemblance in some corresponding part of Jewish history. How he does this we will show. He takes the name of Seth, which signifies "appointed" or "put," given probably because he was appointed in place of Abel. He designates the period of his generation as 205 years—(we suppose to the nativity of Enos.) He then considers Abraham to have been called B. C. 1962; add 205 years to this date of Abraham's life, and he is brought into B. C. 1757. But what is the application of a parallel between Seth and Abraham? Why this. Seth was named *appointed* and Abraham was *appointed*—not by himself but with his son Isaac, to be the head of the Jewish church! But 1757 reaches rather farther than Abraham's day, and as he must make out the 205 years in some way, he stretches it over the whole history of Isaac, and by his own adopted system of chronology makes it run far into the history of Jacob. This, of course is a small matter; for a few years "more or less, are nothing in a scale of hundreds, particularly in the general difficulty existing as to the *exact* dates, in all the chronological systems."*

The periods which he next compares, are those of Enos and Jacob. That of Enos, he considers to have embraced about 190 years, and he desires, of course, to draw the parallel with that of Jacob. Enos means *despairing*. But where is the analogy? Why, he says of Jacob, that his whole life is marked with trouble. But this does not make the parallel, because it does not appear that Jacob ever despaired. This is true, but there is no difficulty in the matter, for "his descendants fall into still deeper trial," the national characteristics being slavery and despair!†

To mention only a few other instances of this species of romancing, we pass over a number of patriarchs until we come to the name of Peleg. Peleg means *division*. The name was given him because in his days the earth was to be divided. Dr. Croly reckons his generation as 130 years: and makes the parallel extend from A. D. 471 to 601. "In the fifth and sixth centuries, the Western Empire . . . was *divided* into separate sovereignties."*

* p. 230, note.

† p. 231.

‡ p. 243.

SERUG means *branching*. His generation includes 130 years; and this period embraces from A. D. 733, to 863; "this was peculiarly the age of *conversion*."*

TERAH means *breathing*. His generation includes 70 years. The corresponding period is A. D. 942 to 1012. Dr. Croly must have been seriously troubled here, one would think, to find an analogy in this period to that of *breathing*. But he is not so troubled as we would suppose. He finds the parallel in the Paulicians who undertook in the west to reform some of the abuses in the church!†

If it were not too serious a matter, we should be disposed to laugh over such childish fancies. And it is humiliating to find a man, a divine of Dr. Croly's genius, so perfectly enamoured of these puerilities, as to descend to the tracing out analogies where imagination alone can find their existence.

There is much in this volume to indicate the possession of great abilities. Had he given his mind to the solution of scriptural difficulties; to an exhibition of the aids which science can render to the cause of religion, he would, we are persuaded, have produced a work or works which would have stood the test of criticism, and have proved of lasting benefit to the world. But it is, to say the least, undignified and unbecoming for a man of his intellectual abilities, to waste his powers upon such trifles as these we have mentioned. We do not question that he deems himself to be doing Christianity some service. We have reason to think otherwise. If ever religion has had to lay down its propositions unqualifiedly, and present its most rigid demonstrations, it is at the present time. Nothing ought to be left to conjecture. And the only effect which this work can have on thoughtful minds, will be to disgust them with fancies which would have been by no means creditable even to the boyhood of the author. We speak thus strongly, because Dr. Croly lays great stress in his preface upon the parallelism which he traces throughout his volume, as an overwhelming argument against scepticism, and as affording the only sure foundation on which the sceptic can be met. We have been so unfortunate as never to have met with the man upon whom this argument would have the least salutary effect.

* p. 249.

† p. 254.

It is time, however, to proceed with some of the parallels of the third cycle. Dr. Croly begins the personal parallel with that between Joseph and the apostle Paul.* When we noticed this, we are free to confess, we wondered in what the likeness consisted. We had seen frequent attempts made to run the parallel between Joseph and our Lord; but it was entirely a new idea—that one existed between Joseph and the apostle Paul. The parallel is made out ingeniously to say the least. Joseph was the son of Jacob's old age, and was the *brother* of Benjamin. Paul of Tarsus was employed by, and enjoyed the confidence of, the Sanhedrim, and was moreover of the *tribe* of Benjamin. To make anything of a parallel here, Saul should have been the son of another tribe. As it happened, he was the son of Benjamin. While Joseph was Benjamin's brother. But Joseph had a new coat given him by his father. Dr. Croly says "it was a *sudden* mark of honour." Perhaps so—but as the Mosaic narrative gives us no hint upon this point, it is as well not to be too wise even in small matters. All we know is that it was "a coat of many colors;" perhaps more correctly a coat of many *pieces*. We are almost afraid to state to those who have never read the work, what is the parallel here. But Dr. Croly has deliberately recorded his firm conviction that the parallel is found in the sudden splendour of the Divine presence which shone around Saul when on his journey to Damascus!

Joseph was sent by his father to see his *shepherd* brethren; they conspire to slay him; he is delivered out of their hands and is sold a slave into Egypt; Jacob mourns for him, and will not be comforted. Our author is never at a loss, and his ingenuity finds an analogy without the least difficulty. "Paul, clothed in the garb of an apostle, went forth to visit the shepherd and the flock of Israel by the command of the great Father of all." They conspired against him, and sought to slay him; Felix designed to *loose* him, but—like Reuben when he left his brother in the pit to gratify his brethren—"willing to do the Jews a pleasure, he *left Paul bound*;" and whilst still bound, Paul was sent a *prisoner*—not to Egypt, but to Rome. How our author could impose upon himself so strangely, as to pen

these words in this connection—"The closeness of detail in the correspondence is striking;"* passes our comprehension; and when he adds these reflections to the narrative. "The minute exactness of circumstances so important to the general narrative, yet so admirably adapted to mark identity, is demonstrative of design; and this design also furnishes an answer to a very striking question."† We wonder at the fascination of a theory which can see that which is not to be seen; but we wonder, most of all, at the wildness of Dr. Croly.

We pass over much of a similar character, and pause to notice his parallel of Moses. The same ingenuity is required here, that we have elsewhere seen to be necessary. The parallel of Moses—is Constantine.‡ Dr. Croly appears to think that this is rather too large a draft upon our credulity, and he significantly adds, "Still, dissimilar as Moses and Constantine are to the eye, kindred peculiarities are impressed on both, which guide the mind to their unity of purpose."

The dissimilarity is certainly very striking to the eye; and we are not—perhaps we ought to be—ashamed to confess, that our minds are not guided to their unity of purpose. The only point in which we can trace the faintest resemblance is the guidance of Moses by a pillar of cloud, and the appearance of a vision to Constantine. This is enough for Dr. Croly, although this is but one small point of resemblance. Moses was born in Egypt, and, though of an obscure family, was of the tribe of Levi—"one of the princes of Israel." He was taken from his mother, and was adopted by the daughter of Pharaoh. "The chief features of Constantine's career observe a close and unequivocal correspondence with those of the Jewish leader." The father of Constantine was the son of a chief noble in Dardania, though at the time of his son's birth, he was in comparative obscurity. Constantine was separated in his boyhood from his mother, who had been divorced by his father on occasion of his becoming one of the Cæsars. *Constantine thus became the son of a princess!* Now it appears that Constantine *was* separated from his mother; and it appears that Moses *was not*. The last mention of Moses's mother leaves her with him at the palace. Constantine was the son of a prince. Moses

* p. 559.

† p. 563.

‡ p. 571.

was nothing of the sort. His father was a poor slave doomed to work in the brick kilns of Egypt. Moses was guided day by day, and night by night, by a pillar of cloud and fire, through forty years of painful and weary pilgrimage. Constantine, when on his march, saw—not through forty years, but for one day, perhaps only for one short moment—a vision of a cross in the Heavens! And this is one of the beautiful parallelisms which we are asked to receive as yielding such powerful testimony to the truth of Christianity. Testimony too which is to shake the very ground from beneath the sceptic, and to leave him without a solitary spot on which he can even rest the sole of his foot. Alas! it is not the first time that splendid talents have been employed on folly; or in which a beautiful theory has been blown to its own destruction. Dr. Croly caught sight of the beauties of a bubble, and in his ardent admiration of these, he gave himself up to the illusion that his bubble was the grand contrivance by which all error was to be removed, and the world reformed.

We have purposely reserved until this place, another parallel which the Dr. has attempted to run, and of which, with remarkable confidence, he exclaims, "It absolutely cuts off every subterfuge of scepticism." It is that between Alexander and Napoleon. Before remarking at length upon this attempted parallel, we wish to observe that there are some very remarkable points of resemblance both in the character of the men, and in the circumstances of their history. We shall have occasion to refer to these. We only wish in this place to enter our protest against the admission of such resemblance being tortured into an argument for the truth of Christianity. We are unable to see the argument; and cannot, therefore discern the assistance that it renders to the cause of Christianity. But to the parallel. Alexander was born at Pella in Macedon. Napoleon was born in Corsica. Pella was a sterile territory; and Corsica was a little wild spot—so Seneca said, but about which there appears to be some difference of opinion. It would have hurt the parallel, but Dr. Croly might as well have said that Pella was at one time the capital of Macedon, and therefore was a much more important place than Corsica. Alexander was educated by Aristotle, and Napoleon was educated at the military school of Brienne in France. The plunder of the Delphian temple

prepared the way for a revolution in Greece which overthrew Philip and his government. The plunder of the church prepared the way for the French revolution. Alexander was the son of the Macedonian king and succeeded to his throne; but it is very certain that Napoleon was not the son of a French king. Alexander invaded Asia Minor, and over-ran it in two campaigns, and then compelled the Persian monarch to treat for peace. He contemplated the mastery of the Mediterranean sea, and conquered Tyre and Egypt. Alexander demanded that he should be recognised as king of Asia. Napoleon did nothing of the kind; but when on the celebration of peace the *Te Deum* was chanted, he only forced back the Austrian ambassador who would have taken precedence in the procession. A beautiful and striking parallel on which to found an argument which was "absolutely to cut off every subterfuge of scepticism?" Napoleon could not conquer Tyre, and so he conquered Alexandria; and then over-ran Egypt. Alexander visited the temple of Jupiter Ammon which he reached after twelve days of fearful suffering. Napoleon sought, not the temple of Jupiter Ammon, but the Mamalukes, and after fourteen days of suffering caught sight of them and of the pyramids! * But enough of such pretence of learning. We cannot consent to wade through the puerility which perverted ingenuity has contrived to bring together in this chapter. It only shows how small the subjects on which a really great mind will condescend to be employed; and how absorption in a theory will contribute to the suspension for a time, of all the nobler faculties, and to a strange obliquity of mental perception. The powers which might be profitably employed upon other matters, become weakened by confinement upon a doubtful theory, and points which no other person can see to bear the least resemblance to each other, are seen, through a perverted medium, to be singularly harmonious. The enthusiasm of Dr. Croly upon the main subject of his volume is perfectly astonishing. He ranks this subject above almost every thing else. He considers the evidence which it yields to Christianity, superior to that adduced from any other quarter; and, as if intoxicated with delight at the splendours of his discovery, he pronounces in a tone of the utmost confidence, that every sub-

* Chapter xlix. pp. 591—621.

terfuge of scepticism is absolutely cut off. A recent reviewer has well and truly said that "Philosophers are but too apt to forget, when they make hypotheses for difficult cases, under the stress of such logical necessities, that a truer logic would teach them that when they have no other solution than fanciful assumptions, they had better leave them alone."* We say with regard to the subject of the present work that the fanciful assumptions are abundant, and that true logic would teach Dr. Croly to leave them all alone. How he could avoid seeing that his parallels were not parallels; that his fancy alone has made divergent histories appear as though running side by side, in beautiful conformity, we are puzzled to comprehend. So it is, however. He never dreams of any possibility of mistake. He is enwrapped in the creations of his own bright fancies, and deluded with the idea that by his work he will give the death blow to infidelity, he gives himself up to the hallucination, and sees parallelisms every where.

The world is not wanting in works on the Evidences of Christianity—works from Paley to Channing, stamped with great mental power, and with a logical accuracy which has effectually precluded all reply. It may be that there are minds which while they cannot reply to these learned and lucid arguments, are not, and will not be, convinced by their reasoning. Could it be shown that such parallelism exists as Dr. Croly has represented, it would—we should think—go far to remove all ground of objection. But, as we before remarked, with no assurance of this parallelism, the evidence of its existence ought to be singularly clear and unquestionable. If any body could detect it, we are sure Dr. Croly could; and if he has not succeeded we are sure the failure has not been owing to his own deficiency of ingenuity, but because there was no parallel to detect. We have thought, as we have read this work, what effect would be wrought upon the mind of any intelligent sceptic by the perusal? Would he feel that every subterfuge was swept away? that his ground had slid from beneath him? and that he was utterly silenced? Would he be thoroughly convinced? We trow not. We find much that is curious, much that is interesting; but we find more that has little authority

* *Edinburgh Review* clxxvi. Art. I.

save in the fancy of the author. It is a beautiful idea, certainly, that the three dispensations unfold into each other, so that the persons and events of the one are mirrored upon the other, the persons and events of the first dispensation living over again in the persons and events of the other two, not in *propria persona*, but in new and brighter characters. Could this idea be sustained? Could history show upon her faithful page, a perfect record of all this, it would be an overwhelming evidence in favour of the Providence of God. But to constitute it an evidence in favour of Christianity, would require a perfect parallel in all its parts, and a perfect accordance of the truths of the three dispensations. The sceptic does not deny the facts of the Christian history. He denies its truths. To prove to him an agreement in the facts while no such agreement is shown between the truths, is to leave his doubts unresolved and even untouched. We do not see that Dr. Croly has done aught that he proposed to do. He framed a beautiful theory, but mistook, most singularly, its bearing. He deemed that he had discovered an argument which would prove an ægis impenetrable to the shafts of infidelity. But when we apply the theory, we find that he has altogether mistaken his object—having confounded two things entirely distinct. There is no discrepancy between Christianity and the Providence of God, but they are not the same thing; and to confound an argument for divine providence, with an argument for Christianity, is about as singular a mistake as any author could well be guilty of.

We have said that Dr. Croly has recorded some singular parallels. It will be interesting to our readers to notice a few of these. The student of ancient history will recollect that when Alexander entered Egypt, he proclaimed himself a worshipper of Apis, and according to the historian, "He assisted in the ceremony, and not to leave the effect negative, he sent to Greece for the persons most eminent as public performers in all the amusements of the theatre." *Mitford*, vol. vii. The first act of Napoleon, on taking possession of Egypt, was to publish to his troops the decree that he recognised fully and freely the worship of Mohammed. "I respect"—was his language—"more than the Mamelukes ever did, God, His Prophet, and the Koran, Sheiks and Imams! assure the people that *we also* are true Musselmans." This coincidence is to say the least, remarkable;

and whether or not—Napoleon purposely copied the wretched policy of Alexander—it is surprising that both should have practised such consummate duplicity in the same land, under the same circumstances, and in the same particulars. Another coincidence is found in the sudden return of the two conquerors to their homes. When Alexander was preparing to visit the antiquities of Upper Egypt, he was suddenly recalled by intelligence that the Persian King was collecting his forces. He found on his arrival at Tyre, that an attempt was made in Greece to dissolve the confederacy, and that the Lacedæmonians had taken up arms to form a new league; Darius having assisted them, as it is supposed, with money. Alexander repressed the insurrection, *suddenly left Egypt*, and prepared for another invasion of the Persian dominions. Napoleon was in Syria when he received news from France, at once of reverses in Italy, and of the difficulties which involved the government. He instantly embarked with sudden resolution for France, when he crushed his opponents, remodelled the state, and made himself first consul. There is here a coincidence—we do not say a very striking one—for we do not think that it is. It is just such a coincidence as can be traced in many histories, and on which we should never think of building an argument in favour of Christianity. It is a coincidence, and that is all. But when Dr. Croly adds in all seriousness—for he is serious—that it is another remarkable parallel that Alexander was twenty-five years of age, and Napoleon *thirty*,* we are disposed to smile at the fond idolatry with which he worships his theory.

But it would be doing Dr. Croly great injustice not to say that there are many things in his volume which we have read with interest, and instruction. The first fourteen chapters embracing a great variety of topics, contain discussions which indicate decided ability, and lead us to wonder that the author has not confined his attention to the elucidation of scriptural difficulties for which we think him especially qualified. His chapter on "Creation," and that on "The Mosaic Geology," we have thought especially interesting, although not prepared to endorse every opinion. That on "The Flame of the Cheru-

* P. 606.

bim," contains an explanation of that subject which we do not remember to have seen, although it is probable that it has been advanced before. The Mosaic narrative records, that "God placed at the gate of Eden, cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life." There is a difficulty here contained in the expression "to keep the way of the tree of life." Does it mean that this celestial guard was to point out the way of the tree of life? or that it was to shield the pathway from encroachment? Dr. Croly in answering these questions, adopts the following theory. He supposes that man, after his expulsion from Eden, was debarred access to the tree of life, and that the flaming cherubim was meant to serve as an oracle for future generations to consult. This exposition involves, of course, the existence of the garden of Eden after the Fall, and Dr. Croly thinks he derives fresh strength to his theory from the language of the historian—that *Cain was driven out from the presence of the Lord*. This is plausible, and as a theory we have no special objection to it. The whole passage, indeed the whole narrative, is confessedly a difficult one, and its exposition is rendered more difficult because of the little light thrown upon it by other portions of the sacred writings. Dr. Croly considers the expression we have just quoted to mean a *local presence*, and thinks it can mean nothing else. We are not certain of this. The same, or a similar phrase, is used in other portions of the sacred writings, where we do not understand a local presence, and we see no necessity for a resort to that theory here. The idea is a beautiful one—that the presence of God was always visible in some way at the gate of Eden, and always accessible to man; but we see no special authority for it, nor do we think that the narrative teaches it. Still we are not disposed to be hypercritical; because, whether the glory of the Lord was, or was not visible at the entrance of Eden, the opposite theory cannot affect any great question, while the silence of the scriptures shows its comparatively little importance.

His conjectures on "the site of Paradise" are adopted mainly from Rennell's Geography of Herodotus, and Faber's Origin of Pagan idolatry. He supposes it to have been in one of the valleys of Armenia, "near the sources of the Tigris and Euphrates," and his reasoning is, to say the least, plausible. But it has always appeared to us, an useless subject for discussion,

inasmuch, as if the site could be discovered, we should suppose it would have been before this. The most extraordinary thing connected with it, is, that the traditions of the countries around the supposed site, are silent upon its location. It is true that the geographical boundaries as recorded by Moses are very distinctly defined; but the deluge has intervened, and Rosenmiller has very justly observed "*Fluvius ille ex quo quatuor alii orti sunt, hodie frustra quaeritur.*" And since the river is not now to be found, and since the traditions of the country are all silent upon its location, we can know no more at present than that Eden was.

We have reviewed Dr. Croly's work somewhat at length, because we deem it objectionable in the main features to which our review has extended. The author has drawn rather more largely upon his fancy than is either expedient, or consistent with the rigid reference to facts which his argument really required. His argument was eminently one that appealed to facts. It had based itself rigidly on these, and should, therefore, have looked to them alone, discarding all that was merely theoretical, and which history would not most thoroughly sanction. He undertook to build a splendid structure of evidence in favour of Christianity, which no honest ingenuity could answer. It was to be composed of solid and parallel facts—facts as thoroughly parallel as though squared and fitted to each other by design. But we find many of his facts anything but parallel, and his conclusions singularly inconsequent. We can scarcely conceive a greater failure. Had he shown his manuscript to any intelligent friend before putting it to press, we incline to the opinion that the volume in its present aspect—as a treatise in favour of Christianity—would not have appeared. As a treatise on divine providence, the work is exceedingly curious, and very interesting. As a treatise on the evidences of Christianity it is utterly worthless. In nothing ought he to have been more careful. In nothing could he have been more careless. He has exercised much judgment in the early chapters in which his main argument is not touched; but in the very portion where all his matureness of judgment was needed, because it was the pith of his whole work, he assumes a loftier and more confident tone, but seems to lay aside his solidity of judgment, and to be afflicted with an obliquity of vision. If any sceptic shall be

convinced by his work to believe Christianity to have come from God, we shall rejoice to know it, but it will be owing, more to the merits of the cause than to the merits of the arguments adduced for its support. Real evidence in favour of Christianity is always of service, because there are some minds which will always find in such evidence an adaptation to their peculiar modes of thought; and we never accustom ourselves to look with indifference, much less with contempt, upon any argument, which, though not characterized by profoundness of thought, or originality, is yet faultless as regards its premises and conclusions. Learning and talent may not need it, but there are minds which may be assisted by it, and led to an abandonment of a cheerless infidelity. But such is not the case with the work before us. Its premises are questionable—when they ought to be beyond the reach of doubt, and its conclusions therefore cannot be expected to be perfectly satisfactory. It is designed especially for thoughtful minds, and by the very novelty of its subject is calculated to arrest the attention, and by the ingenuity of the discussion to fix it. We are sorry not to be able to say as much for its ability to convince the judgment. In this the only really important point, there is an essential and pervading fault which renders useless the whole volume; and in contrast with the lofty pretensions, and high sounding empiricism of the work, renders the failure little short of ridiculous.

ART. VI.—*A Manual of Presbytery* (comprising tracts by the Rev. Dr. Miller of Princeton and the Rev. Mr. Lorimer of Glasgow.) Second edition, revised and enlarged. Edinburgh. John Johnstone. 1848. 8vo.

If it be true, as we believe, that there is no order of ministers superior to presbyters, now existing by divine appointment in the Christian Church, either as the successors of the primitive bishops, who were themselves no more than elders, or as the successors of the primitive apostles, who, in that capacity, had no successors; it follows, as a necessary consequence, that presbyters or elders, being thus the highest class of officers existing

by divine right in the church, must be invested with the highest powers now belonging to the ministry, including those of discipline and ordination, so that there cannot be higher ministerial authority than that which is derived from presbyters. This negative proof might be considered amply sufficient for the vindication of our orders from the charge of invalidity, so far as it is founded on the want of what is called an episcopal organization in our churches. To remove all doubt, however, and present the truth in both its aspects, we propose to exhibit, in a positive form, direct proof of the fact that presbyters, as presbyters, possessed and exercised the highest powers now belonging to the ministry, even in apostolic times, from which we may infer *a fortiori*, that the same authority is vested in them now.

It will be recollected, that the presbyterial office is coeval with the church, and that Paul and Barnabas, during their missionary tour in Asia Minor, not only planted churches, but “ordained them elders in every city.” If then we can discover with what powers these early presbyters were clothed, we shall establish a sure basis for our subsequent inquiries. And in this investigation we are greatly aided by the preservation, in the Acts of the Apostles, of a valedictory address by Paul to certain persons of this class, when he was leaving Greece and Asia Minor for Jerusalem; in which address, we find not only strong expressions of his private feelings, and allusions to his ministerial labours, but advice to those whom he addressed, as to the right discharge of their official duties. It affords us, therefore, evidence, as to the functions of the primitive elders, which is none the less interesting or instructive, because furnished incidentally.

The statement here referred to is recorded in the twentieth chapter of Acts, where we read that “Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia,” “and from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.” When they were come, he appealed to them as witnesses of his fidelity to the churches of that region, in declaring unto them all the counsel of God. He then announces to them that their personal connexion was dissolved forever, and exhorts them to the diligent performance of the duties which would thenceforth be peculiarly incumbent on them. And in so doing, it is worthy of remark, that he makes no allusion to

the intended substitution of another in his place, as their official guide and counsellor, but speaks to them precisely as he might, or rather must, have spoken, on the supposition, that from that time forth they were themselves to exercise the highest powers in the church of Ephesus. If he had still expected them to act as mere inferiors and assistants, he would naturally, not to say necessarily, have comforted their grief at his departure, by the promise of a competent successor, and in warning them of dangers by which their church was menaced, would of course have exhorted them to faithful and diligent co-operation with their bishop. But the passage contains nothing of all this; a circumstance which, though it may prove little by itself, as to the organization of the church at Ephesus, affords, at least, an instance of remarkable coincidence with that hypothesis which we maintain, and, what is more important to our present purpose, fully justifies the inference, that the powers here ascribed to the Ephesian presbyters were powers to be exercised in virtue of their presbyterial character, and not by delegation from a higher class of permanent church-officers. For if the apostle could direct them to perform these acts, not only without making his own presence and concurrence a prerequisite, but in such terms as really exclude it, how much less reason have we to believe, that their validity was meant to be dependent on the sanction of a bishop, who is not so much as mentioned, and of whose existence we have no proof elsewhere.

Nor is this a mere negative deduction from Paul's silence, as to any superior authority at Ephesus; for the same thing is implied in the choice of his expressions. "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves,"—*therefore*, since you are now to be deprived of the extraordinary, temporary supervision which you have enjoyed, and to be left with the whole burden of the church upon you, under this change of circumstances, you must be watchful on your own account, not only for your personal safety and advantage, but for that of the church also—"take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock,"—not the flock of another shepherd, but their own, for which they were directly responsible—"over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers," ἐπισκόπους or bishops. The bearing of this usage of the term upon the question of episcopal organization has been often discussed elsewhere. What is here important to

be noticed is, that these Ephesian presbyters were shepherds of God's flock, not described as under-shepherds, that is, as the deputies of any human shepherd, but as constituted such by God himself, and that not merely by his providential dispensations, but by a special designation of the Holy Ghost. This explicit mention of the *jus divinum* under which they acted, when viewed in connexion with the absence of all reference to any higher local power, either actual or prospective, makes it not only improbable, but scarcely possible, that what they are empowered or required to do, was to be done by delegation, or in any other way than by direct authority from God himself, bestowed upon them as the highest permanent and local rulers of the church of Ephesus.

With these views of the character in which the elders are addressed, and of the right by which their functions were to be discharged, let us now endeavour to determine in the same way, what these functions were. The answer to this question is afforded by the words immediately succeeding those already quoted: "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to FEED THE CHURCH OF GOD, which he hath purchased with his own blood." As the church has been already represented as a flock, the official duty of these elders towards it is described by a cognate metaphor. The exact correspondence of the terms is less apparent in our version than in the original, where the word rendered *flock*, and that rendered to *feed*, are collateral derivatives from a common root, and stand in the same relation to the word which means *a shepherd*. To the verb, both etymology and usage give the sense, not of *feeding* merely, but of *acting as a shepherd, doing a shepherd's duty*, of which feeding is a most essential part, but not by any means the whole, since it would either be impossible or unavailing, without further care in guiding to the fold and to the pasture, in collecting and reclaiming, in protecting from the weather and from beasts of prey, and in other slight but indispensable attentions, all included in the literal vocation of a shepherd, and in both the literal and the figurative import of the Greek verb which Paul uses. Unless then the English verb to *feed* be taken with such latitude of meaning as to comprehend all this, it no more expresses the whole duty of a shepherd (as the Greek word does), than the verb to *shoot* describes

the business of a soldier or a hunter, or to *plough* that of a farmer. It is highly important that our exposition of this passage should be wholly unaffected by a prejudice, connected only with the English version, and arising from its failure to express the full sense of Paul's phraseology. Even when figuratively used, the verb *ποιμαίνω* is employed by the Greek writers to denote, not merely *nourishment*, but *care*, in the most extensive sense of the expression, such care as faithful shepherds give to helpless and dependent flocks. If, then, the church at Ephesus was a spiritual flock, and these its elders spiritual shepherds, the duty here enjoined upon them is not merely that of "feeding them with knowledge," by public and private teaching, but also that of governing, controlling, and protecting them, as well from the effects of internal corruption, as from those of violence and fraud *ab extra*. It is, in short, a metaphorical description of the ministerial office, in its whole extent, as comprehending all that is essential to the continued existence of the church, and the attainment of the ends for which it was established, just as the business of a shepherd comprehends all that is necessary to the safety and well being of the flock. There is no more reason in the text itself, for excluding any of the ministerial functions from the figurative import of the verb *ποιμαίνειν*, than there is for excluding some things in the nature and condition of the church from the figurative import of the substantive *ποιμνιον*; if the latter is a general description of the church, the former is a general description of the ministry, its duties and its powers. And this, which is the natural and obvious meaning of the figurative terms which the apostle uses, agrees, in all points, with his subsequent expressions. "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves"—a common figure for false teachers—"enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." These are the two great evils, with which the church was threatened, error of doctrine, and schism as the consequence; for this is the relative position of the two things, as described in scripture, not the converse, as maintained by those who make purity of doctrine to depend upon external regularity, as we shall see hereafter. To prevent these evils, whether threatened from within or from without, and to prevent

them, not by private effort merely, but by authoritative action, is distinctly made the duty of the presbyters of Ephesus.

That the apostle refers not to personal but official influence, appears from the solemn mention of their designation by the Holy Ghost, with which he prefaces his exhortation. There would be something quite incongruous in making the divine right of these presbyters the ground of an injunction which was equally binding upon all true Christians. This would be tantamount to saying, since the Holy Ghost has placed you in a high official station, be assiduous in personal and private duties. If, on the other hand, the reference is clearly to the influence exerted by these presbyters, as such, and in the exercise of their distinctive functions, then the question meets us, how could they comply with this injunction, unless they were intrusted with the keys both of discipline and doctrine, with the power, not of teaching merely, but of maintaining purity of doctrine, by deciding controversies, trying heretics, silencing false teachers, and excluding from the ministry all such as were esteemed by them unfaithful or unfit? But these are acts supposing the possession of the highest powers now belonging to the ministry, not merely those of preaching and of ordinary pastoral control, but also those of ministerial discipline and ordination.

It may be objected, that the duty, to which the elders, in the next verse, are specifically called, is not that of judging or of acting with authority, but merely that of watching and remembering his former admonitions, and that this implies the existence of a higher power which alone was competent to check the evil. But if this be so, how is it, that he does not even mention or allude to such superior power? It cannot be imagined, that he merely meant to terrify the elders by predicting future evils to the church, without suggesting a preventive or a remedy; and yet this is undoubtedly the case, if those whom he addresses could do nothing more than watch and bear in mind his warnings. If it be said, that the elders must have been aware of the existence of these "higher powers," and needed not to be informed of it by Paul, it then becomes impossible to understand why he addressed his exhortations to the presbyters, and not to their superiors, who alone had power to prevent or remedy the threatened evil. Nor can this difficulty

be removed by taking it for granted, first, that there was a bishopric of Ephesus, above the eldership, and then that it was vacant, so that Paul was under the necessity, at this time, of addressing the "inferior clergy." For in that case he could hardly have omitted all allusion to the fact assumed, and all injunction to obey the bishop, when he should be sent, and co-operate with him for the prevention of the evils to be feared; whereas he seems, as we have seen, to throw the whole responsibility upon the elders, and addresses them precisely as he must have done, if he expected and intended the entire care of the Ephesian church to be devolved on them. To take the contrary for granted, in despite of the obvious tenor of Paul's language, is, in effect, to destroy the value of all proof derived from language, except in the case of an explicit, categorical assertion, which is granted, upon all sides, to be wanting here. A simple test of probability, in this case, is afforded by the fact, that no one, reading the apostle's exhortation, either could or would derive from it the notion of an ecclesiastical authority at Ephesus, above that of the presbyters, to whom the exhortation is addressed; and on the other hand, that no one so reading it, could fail to gather from it, in itself considered, that these elders were invested with official right and power to prevent or to redress the evils here predicted.

The truth is that the other supposition rests upon the foregone conclusion, that a prelatical authority, distinct from the presbyterate, did certainly exist at Ephesus, and that the subjection of the elders to it is implied or presupposed in the apostle's exhortation. But denying, as we do, that any proof of such authority exists in any quarter, and interpreting Paul's language by itself and by the context, without reference to any preconceived hypothesis whatever, we are forced to the conclusion, that he here addresses the Ephesian elders as the rulers of the church, and that when he exhorts them to be watchful and remember, he refers not to private but official vigilance, and to such a recollection of his warnings as should lead to the due exercise of their authority in quenching the insidious fires of heresy and schism, which they could not do without possessing all the power which a bishop, or derivative apostle, on the opposite hypothesis, could possibly have exercised. The objection to this argument from this address of Paul, that it does not

ascribe to the Ephesian elders the specific powers of discipline and ordination, proves too much; for it would prove that they were not even authorized to preach or to administer the sacraments, since these are not specifically mentioned, though included in the figurative meaning of *ποιμαίνειν*, which, however, includes more, and is descriptive of the ministerial work in general, as we have seen already. The apostle speaks of them, either as having all the ministerial powers, or as having none; because the terms which he employs are those of general description, not minute specification, and must either be descriptive of the office as a whole, or not at all.

But even granting, for the sake of argument, that *ποιμαίνειν* merely means *to feed*, and that feeding is a metaphor for preaching and the sacraments, it does not follow, that the powers of discipline and ordination, although not specifically mentioned, are excluded. It is clear, not only that the whole includes its parts, but also that the greater may include the less. As the general ascription of the ministerial powers to these elders would imply that they possessed each separately, so too the ascription of a higher ministerial power might imply that they possessed a lower. Now discipline and ordination, it will be admitted, derive their value from the ends which they promote, and which they were intended to secure. The end of discipline is to preserve purity, and to exclude the unworthy from the privileges of the church. The end of ordination is to secure a valid ministration of the word and sacraments. But the word and the sacraments themselves have an independent and intrinsic value. If the power of dispensing them had been conferred on any who thought proper to make use of it, without any special ordination to an office, whatever inconveniences might have attended that arrangement, it could not have impaired the intrinsic value of the word and sacraments. But if, on the other hand, there were no word or sacraments, ordination would be useless. And the same may be said, *mutatis mutandis*, as to government or discipline. These then, to wit, ordination and discipline, are subsidiary functions, which derive their value from the relation they sustain to others. The possession of these powers, therefore, might have been inferred from the possession of the higher powers upon which they are dependent, even if the latter had alone been mentioned. But the fact, as we have seen

already, is, that all the powers of the ministry collectively are comprehended in the metaphor of acting as a shepherd to the flock of Christ.

If it should be alleged in this case, as it has been in some others, that the powers, apparently ascribed to presbyters, were really intended to be exercised by bishops, here included under the generic name of elders, we reply, that such a mode of reasoning precludes the possibility of proving anything, except so far as the opposing party may think proper to allow it. If the ascription of a certain power to a certain class of officers, distinctly named, is not a proof of their possessing it, the fact is not susceptible of proof at all. And this extraordinary process, let it be observed, is equally available on either side of a disputed question. If one man may explain away the acts ascribed to presbyters as the exclusive acts of bishops, then another may explain away the acts ascribed to deacons as the exclusive acts of presbyters, and those ascribed to men as the exclusive acts of angels. It should also be observed, that if one of the official acts ascribed to presbyters may be explained away as the exclusive act of a superior order, any other of the acts so ascribed may be explained in the same manner. If, when presbyters are spoken of as exercising all the ministerial powers, one may argue that bishops are the only elders who are thus empowered to ordain, another may, with equal right, allege that bishops are the only elders authorized to preach or to baptize, and that the primitive presbyters did neither, by themselves or in their own right, but merely united, as assessors, in the preaching and baptizing acts of their superiors in office. To an argument which naturally leads to such results, it is sufficient to oppose a simple negative, by saying that as bishops or apostles are not mentioned in the text, the official acts ascribed to presbyters were meant to be considered as performed by them alone in that capacity. When therefore Paul describes the presbyters of Ephesus as having been divinely called to act as shepherds of God's flock, we must regard it as a proof that all the powers of the ministry, including those of discipline and ordination, were possessed and exercised by elders, even in the days of the apostles.

A large part of what has now been said applies, with equal force, to 1 Tim. v. 17, where the same apostle speaks, on a different occasion, not only of the same office, but of the same

men, not only of elders in general, but of Ephesian elders in particular. Supposing, as we have before done, that *πρεσβύτεροι* is here a name of office, it cannot be descriptive of the office of apostle or apostle-bishop, partly for the reason above given in another case, that the assumption is entirely gratuitous, partly because Timothy, according to the adverse theory, would then be represented as a hyper-apostolical church-officer, not only equal but superior to Paul, who was merely an apostle. If, on the other hand, the word denotes presbyters or elders, in the proper sense, then the apostle must be speaking of the powers which belonged to them in that capacity, and not as the mere agents of a higher power. That no superiority of Timothy to these Ephesian elders is implied in the apostle's words, has been often shown, and will be here assumed. Since then, it is of elders that he speaks, and of elders acting in their own right, we have only to inquire what official functions are ascribed to them, in order to determine what the powers of a presbyter or elder were, in apostolic times. "Let the ELDERS THAT RULE well be counted worthy of double honour." They are here distinctly recognised as rulers in the church, and this must surely comprehend the right of discipline, if not of ordination. It may be said, however, that *προεστῶτες* merely means presiding, holding the first place in the society, and therefore denotes relative position, but not office or official power. We have assumed, however, that *πρεσβύτεροι* denotes official rank; and whether *προεστῶτες* does not signify the exercise of an official power, is a question which can only be determined by a reference to usage. In Rom. xii. 8, ὁ προϊστάμενος cannot denote mere priority of rank or conspicuous position, for two reasons: first, because a man could not be exhorted to hold such a position with diligence; and secondly, because all the other terms connected with it signify specific actions. The same thing is evident from the collocation of *προϊσταμένους* in 1 Thess. v. 12, between *κοπιῶντας* and *νουθετοῦντας*, both denoting specific functions of the ministry. In 1 Tim. iii. 5, the bishop is described as one that ruleth well (*καλῶς προϊστάμενον*) his own house, which can hardly mean one who holds the first place in it, without any original jurisdiction over it. Let the sense which *προΐστημι* evidently has in all these cases, be applied to that before us, and it follows of course, that presbyters or bishops are here spoken of as ruling the church, just as really as they are

elsewhere said to rule their families. That the government referred to is that of the church, appears from what follows in the same verse, as to labouring in word and doctrine. If, then, *πρεσβύτεροι* is here a name of office, which must be allowed by those, at least, who use this text to prove Timothy's superiority to presbyters, then the officers described by it are clearly recognised as rulers in the church, without any reference whatever to a superior human power. Where shall we find an equally distinct ascription of the ruling power to apostles, not of the original thirteen?

Here then are two passages, in which the same apostle speaks of the Ephesian elders, first metaphorically as the shepherds of Christ's flock, then literally as the rulers of the church. Whatever doubt might be supposed to rest upon the meaning of the terms employed, in either case, may be disposed of by comparing them together. That *ποιμαίνειν* does not merely denote *feeding*, whether literal or spiritual, but the whole extent of the pastoral care, including government, may now be argued from the *προεστῶτες* of the parallel passage. And that *προεστῶτες*, on the other hand, includes the powers of discipline and ordination, is rendered still more probable by Paul's exhorting these same elders, in the other case, to duties which imply the possession of these powers. The two texts, taken in conjunction, so as to explain each other, warrant us in stating as a general fact, that the Ephesian elders are twice spoken of by Paul as rulers of the church, without any intimation that the power of ordination is to be excepted, or that they acted in subjection to a bishop. Now the terms of this description must be applicable, either to presbyters in general, or to the presbyters of Ephesus exclusively. The latter supposition would imply, that there was no uniformity in primitive church-government, the same class of officers possessing different powers in different cases, a hypothesis destructive of all arguments against presbyterian orders, founded on alleged deviations from the apostolic model.

We have moreover a direct proof that this organization was a general one in the first epistle of Peter, where he addresses the elders, not of one church merely, but of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; calls himself their fellow-elder, and exhorts them to "feed the flock of God"—the same expression used by Paul to the Ephesian elders—"taking the

oversight thereof, not by constraint but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage,"—this implies that they were under a temptation so to do, which could scarcely be the case, if they were mere assessors to a bishop—"and when the chief shepherd shall appear"—this clearly implies that they were under-shepherds only to the head of the church—"ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." If it can be supposed that all the churches of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, were accidentally deprived of bishops at this time, it would go far to prove that the privation was a matter of but little moment. If, however, this description has respect to presbyters in general, we have proof that the primitive presbyters were rulers of the church, and no proof that discipline and ordination were excepted from their powers.

With the general view, which we have thus obtained from scripture, of the presbyterial office as a whole, let us now compare the more specific language of the same apostle in the same epistle, when he says to Timothy, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." (1 Tim. iv. 14.) If this does not relate to ordination, there can be no reason for supposing that the parallel passage in 2 Tim. i. 6, relates to ordination; and as the transaction recorded in Acts xiii. 1—3 was nothing more than a solemn designation to a special service, the result is, that we have, in the New Testament no proof that any rite of ordination was considered necessary, nor any instance of its having been performed, the word sometimes rendered by the English verb *ordain* being a general expression for the act of constituting or appointing. So far, then, from the act of ordination, as distinct from that of designation or appointment, being formally reserved, as the peculiar prerogative of a superior order in the ministry, it would not seem to have been used at all, and the general terms in which the presbyters are spoken of, as rulers of the church, are to be understood as comprehending all the powers necessary to its maintenance and government. But even granting that the text relates to ordination in the proper sense, it has been alleged that the ordaining act is not ascribed to presbyters, as such, but to apostles.

In support of this assertion, very different positions have been taken. In the first place it has been alleged, that the presbytery may have consisted wholly of apostles. Not to reiterate the reasons which have been already given, for resisting all gratuitous assumptions, tending to reverse the natural import of language, and to render proof impossible, we answer this objection by a counter allegation, that the presbytery may have consisted wholly of mere presbyters. The two possibilities will balance one another, and in choosing between them, the word *πρεσβυτέριον* must have due weight. It is certainly more likely, in the absence of explicit proof, that *πρεσβυτέριον*, if it means a body of men at all, means a body of mere presbyters, than that it means a body of apostles. The apostles, being presbyters, might be included in the name; but as they had a distinctive title of their own, it is natural to suppose, that if their distinctive functions were the subject of discourse, their distinctive title would be used, and, on the other hand, that when the generic title is employed, the functions spoken of are not the peculiar functions of apostles, as apostles, but those which are common to them and presbyters. Or even if *πρεσβυτέριον* here denotes apostles, the use of the name in this connexion shows that it was in the character of presbyters that they ordained. It seems incredible, that if they held two offices, a higher and a lower, those acts which they performed by virtue of the former, should be connected with the title of the latter. The bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church are, in some cases, rectors of particular parishes. When we read therefore, of a man as rector of a certain church, we may be reading of a bishop; but no one acquainted with the true facts of the case would speak of a bishop by the other title, when ascribing to him acts which, according to the customs of that church, could only be performed by him as bishop. No clergyman of New Jersey, it may be presumed, would speak of having been ordained by the rector of St. Mary's, Burlington. On the other hand, the official record of a baptism, as having been administered by the rector of that church, would be regarded as conclusive evidence that parochial clergymen have power to baptize; nor would it be invalidated by the allegation, that as the rector in question was a bishop, it was in the latter character alone that he baptized; much less by the suggestion that he

may have been a bishop, and that ordinary rectors therefore had no such authority. If, then, the apostles are here mentioned as ordainers, and as forming a *πρεσβυτέριον* for the purpose, it must have been in the character of presbyters that they ordained. Supposing, then, that *πρεσβυτέριον* means a body of men, it matters not of whom it was composed; for, whatever else they may have been, they must have been presbyters, and as such they ordained.

To escape from this dilemma, it has been alleged, that *πρεσβυτέριον* denotes, not the ordainers, but the office of a presbyter. To this there are two very serious objections. In the first place, the construction is unusual and unnatural, the laying on of the hands of an office. According to all usage and analogy, the genitive, after *χειρῶν* must denote the persons, to whom the hands belonged, and by whom the imposition was performed. Can it be fortuitous, that, out of more than a hundred other cases, in which some form of *χείρ* is followed in construction by the genitive, there is not one in which it can be supposed to signify any thing, except the person whose hands are mentioned? Or can it be supposed, that the relation of τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου to χειρῶν, in the case before us, is different from that of μου to the same word, in the precisely parallel expression, 2 Tim. i. 6? The other objection to this interpretation of the word is, that in the only other places where it occurs in the New Testament, it means, and can mean, nothing but a body of πρεσβύτεροι.* Before we can explain it of the office, therefore, we must adopt, first, an unnatural and unparallelled construction, and then, an unauthorized meaning of the principal word. That is to say, it cannot be so explained, without doing violence both to lexicography and grammar.

But there is still another method of evading the conclusion, that presbyters are here represented as ordaining. This is by asserting, that even if *πρεσβυτέριον* does mean a body of elders, μετὰ does not mean *by* but *with*, denoting mere participation, not authoritative action, so that presbyters are not represented as ordaining, but merely as joining in the ordination. This view of the passage takes for granted, first, that the preposition cannot mean *by*, but must mean *with*; and then, that if it does mean *with*, it must connect the action of the presbyters, as mere

* Luke xxii. 66. Acts xxii. 5.

assessors, with the authoritative act of the apostles, as ordainers. Both these assumptions are entirely unauthorized. The Greek *μετὰ*, like the English *with*, has sometimes the secondary sense of *by, by means of*. The origin of this secondary meaning seems to be, that the agent acts *with* his instrument, in the strict sense, i. e. in company with it; and thus the preposition, which strictly conveys this idea only, conveys by implication that of instrumentality. The transition from the one sense to the other may be seen in such expressions as the following. 'Pursue him with the sword, and then destroy him with the sword.' In the first phrase, *with* denotes merely that the sword is to accompany the pursuers; in the second it denotes, that the sword is the instrument, by which they are to act. This etymological analysis is confirmed by the usage of the New Testament. "Thou shalt make me full of joy with (*μετὰ*) thy countenance." (Acts ii. 28.) This cannot mean 'thou, together with thy countenance, shalt make me full of joy'—nor, 'thou shalt make me, together with thy countenance, full of joy'—but 'thou, by means of thy countenance (or presence), shalt make me full of joy.' The same thing, in substance, may be said of Acts xiii. 17: "and *with* an high arm brought he them out of it." In Acts xiv. 27 we read, that when Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, "they gathered the church together and rehearsed all that God had done with them (*μετ' αὐτῶν*)," and again, Acts xv. 4, "they declared all things that God had done with them." This does not mean "to them," as it might possibly in English, because *μετὰ* is not used elsewhere in that sense, and because the context shows that the historian means what God had done to the Gentiles *by* them or *through* them, as his instruments. These examples will suffice to show, that *μετὰ* may mean *by*, as well as *with*, and that it is not, therefore, to be taken for granted, that it here expresses a different kind of action. Granting, however, that it does mean *with*, in the strict sense, what two things does it connect? The imposition of hands with what? The adverse argument assumes, not only that it may, but that it must, connect the imposition of hands by the presbytery with the ordaining act of the apostle, which is not mentioned at all. Now if any rule of construction can be looked upon as fixed, it is that what is expressed, other things being equal, must be preferred to what is not expressed, but

merely conjectured or supposed. According to this principle, *μετὰ*, if it merely means *together with*, must connect the imposition of the hands of the presbytery with the prophecy or revelation, mentioned just before. How was the gift conferred on Timothy? By means of a divine communication, *διὰ προφητείας*. By that alone? No, but by revelation, *together with* the laying on of hands, which is essentially equivalent to saying, 'by revelation *and* the imposition of hands.' Whatever force the *διὰ* has in relation to *προφητείας* it has in relation to *ἐπιθέσεως*, the *μετὰ* serving merely to connect them.

We are then reduced to this alternative. If *μετὰ* is a mere connective, it connects *προφητείας* with *ἐπιθέσεως*, and implies that the ordination was as much effected by the one as by the other, or that both were alike instruments or channels of communication, by which the gift of God was conveyed to Timothy. But if *μετὰ* is more than a connective, and itself denotes *by means of*, then the act of the presbytery is itself described, as the medium or instrument of ordination. On the whole, then, it appears, that unless we give to *πρεσβυτέριον* a meaning which it has not elsewhere, and connect it with the words before it in a manner which is utterly at variance with the usage of the language, or assume, without necessity or right, that it here denotes a body of apostles, or that the action of apostles, although not expressed, is understood, and that of the presbytery made dependent on it, we are under the necessity of drawing the conclusion, that presbyters, in apostolic times, ordained. And this, which is the only exposition of the text that harmonizes fully with the usage of the words and with the principles of grammar, that supposes nothing and imagines nothing, but allows the text to speak for itself, is moreover recommended by its perfect agreement with the natural and obvious meaning of the passages before considered, in which presbyters are spoken of as bearing the whole burden of church government, and called to duties which imply the power not only of discipline but of ordination.

But although these passages contain enough to warrant the conclusion, that the primitive presbyters possessed and exercised the highest powers now belonging to the ministry, it cannot be denied, that this conclusion would be rendered more completely satisfying, if it were possible to cite a case, in which there could be no dispute or doubt, in relation either to the acts described,

or to the persons represented as performing them, on both which points there is some room for diversity of judgment in the cases just considered, though the balance of probabilities appears to us decidedly in favour of the ground which we defend. But this preponderance would be the more decided and conspicuous, from the collateral evidence afforded even by a single case, in which all parties could agree that certain persons are described as exercising certain powers. Now the fact is, that we have it in our power to adduce not only one case of the kind supposed, but two, which we shall now proceed to state.

It is granted, upon all sides, that Timothy in Ephesus, and Titus in Crete, possessed and exercised the highest powers now belonging to the ministry. So fully is this fact admitted by our adversaries, that they build upon it their most specious argument, to prove that the apostolic office is perpetual. Our objections to that argument have been already stated; but the fact upon which it is founded, we agree with our opponents in asserting. We maintain, with them, that there are no ministerial functions now existing in the church, which were not exercised by Timothy and Titus, who are clearly recognised as having power not only to preach and administer the sacraments but to ordain and govern. It is, however, a matter of some moment to observe the nature of the evidence, which forms the ground of this unanimous conclusion. The point at which we differ is the question whether the possession of these powers necessarily supposes a superiority of permanent official rank in Timothy and Titus above presbyters. Our reasons for believing that it does not, have already been detailed, and what we now design is merely to direct attention to the nature of the evidence, by which the opposite opinion is sustained, and which is certainly not destitute of plausibility. The argument may be succinctly stated thus, that since the right of ordination and of ministerial discipline is recognised by Paul, in his epistles to these two men, as belonging to them, they must of necessity have been superior to the presbyters whom they were to ordain and discipline.

This conclusion is vitiated by the false assumption, upon which it rests, that ordination to an office in the church can only be derived from one who holds a higher office, and that ministers of equal rank cannot mutually discipline each other. But

for this defect, the reasoning would be conclusive. They are clearly commanded to ordain and exercise authority, and this, if inconsistent with equality of rank and identity of office, would demonstrate their superiority to presbyters. It will not, however, be contended, even by the warmest advocates of this opinion, that the evidence of this superiority, contained in Paul's epistles, is the strongest that can be imagined. They will grant, not only that a formal categorical assertion of the fact disputed would be stronger proof than that which is derived by inference from Paul's instructions, but that even in default of such assertion, the contested point might possibly have been much more indisputable than it is. If, for example, it had been recorded, as a historical fact, that Timothy and Titus acted towards the presbyters of Ephesus and Crete as their official inferiors, directing all their movements, and controlling the discharge of their official duties by minute instructions, our opponents would no doubt regard the proof of their superiority as stronger than it now is. And the evidence would surely be regarded as still more decisive, if among the books of the New Testament there were epistles written by Timothy and Titus to the presbyters of Ephesus and Crete; containing no recognition of equality beyond what is habitually used by modern bishops to their youngest clergy; directing the movements of the elders in a positive and peremptory manner, without any reference to their own inclination or opinion; the superior rank of the two writers would be looked upon as quite indisputable. But if, in addition to all this, the elders were required to exercise their highest powers as the representatives or delegates of Timothy and Titus, with directions to pursue a certain course, until the writers should be personally present, and with kind but authoritative hints as to the personal improvement of the presbyters addressed, it must be owned that the denial of superior official rank in Timothy and Titus would be hopeless. Now it happens, unfortunately for the adverse argument, that no such evidence exists, in reference to Timothy and Titus, whose superiority to presbyters must stand or fall with the assumption, that the power of ordination and of discipline implies a permanent diversity of rank. But what we wish especially to bring before the reader is the interesting fact, that the very evidence, which

would be universally acknowledged, as sufficient to establish the superiority of Timothy and Titus, with respect to presbyters, does certainly exist, in the case of Paul, with respect to Timothy and Titus themselves. The facts, which constitute this evidence, have been already stated in detail, but in different connexions. That their bearing on the question now before us may be seen, a brief recapitulation will be necessary, under several particulars.

And first, let it be observed, that in the other books of the New Testament, that is to say, exclusive of the three epistles to Timothy and Titus, they are mentioned in a manner, which not only furnishes no proof of their equality to Paul, but naturally leads to the conclusion of their being his inferiors, in rank and office. In the Acts of the Apostles, it will not be disputed, that Timothy appears as Paul's inferior, a young man chosen to attend him in his missionary travels, as a helper and a confidential messenger. It may be said, indeed, that it would not be fair to argue, from the first stage of Timothy's career, that he was always Paul's inferior; and this is true. But if we find Paul subsequently speaking of and to him, in a tone precisely suited to this original relation of the parties, it will surely make it highly probable, to say the least, that this relation still continued to subsist. And that this is really the case will be perceived upon comparing the place occupied by Timothy, as Paul's *διάκονος* or *ὑπηρέτης*, in the Acts of the Apostles, with the way in which Paul speaks to the Corinthians of having sent Timotheus to them and requests that he may be among them without fear, and that no man may despise him, and that he may be sent back to the Apostle in due time (1 Cor. xvi. 10, 11.) It is plain from these words, not only that Timothy was acting as Paul's messenger, and under his direction, but also that the service was a temporary one, and that when it was accomplished, he was to return to his accustomed duties, as the apostle's personal attendant. And that this was not a solitary case of such employment, is apparent from the first epistle to the Thessalonians, where Paul speaks first of having sent Timotheus to them (ch. iii. 2,) and then of his return and of the news which he brought back (v. 6,) to which may be added Phil. ii. 19, where he intimates his purpose to send Timotheus to them, not to remain there, but to bring him an account of their condition. In this last case, the execution of the purpose is left dependent upon

Paul's own movements and convenience (v. 23), with an intimation that the sending of Timothy was merely meant to be a substitute for the apostle's personal attendance (v. 24.) The relation between Timothy and Paul, apparent in these passages, may be compared to that between an aid-de-camp and his commander, the two main duties, in both cases, being those of personal attendance and of active service in communicating orders. That the relative position of Titus was the same, may be inferred from Paul's allusions to "the coming of Titus," as of one who had been absent upon special duty, to the report which he had made of the state of things at Corinth, and to the effect produced upon him by his visit to the church there. (2 Cor. vii. 6, 7, 13, 15.) It may also be observed that the Apostle speaks of the obedience and respect with which the Corinthians had treated Titus, as a mark of their submission to his own apostolical authority (vs. 15, 16.) Another incidental reference to Paul's employing Titus in this manner may be found in 2 Tim. iv. 10, where he is mentioned among Paul's immediate followers. "Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia; Titus to Dalmatia; only Luke is with me; take Mark and bring him with thee; for he is profitable for me *εἰς διακονίαν*," not "for the ministry" in general, but as a *διάκονος* or personal assistant in my labours. It seems plain that all the persons here named bore the same relation to the apostle, and were equally under his authority. Although Titus, therefore, is not mentioned in the Acts, there can be no doubt that his course began, like Timothy's, in personal attendance upon Paul in his journeys, to which indeed we find express allusion in Gal. ii. 1, 3, where his Greek descent and circumcision are referred to, and the fact recorded of his having gone with Paul and Barnabas, on a particular occasion, to Jerusalem.

Both from the history and the epistles, therefore, independently of those addressed to Timothy and Titus, it would naturally be inferred, that these men were inferior to Paul, and acted under his direction. It may, indeed, be said, that they are clearly recognised as ministers, that Timothy is mentioned as Paul's work-fellow (Rom. xvi. 21), "one that worketh the work of the Lord even as I do" (2 Cor. iv. 17,) as a "brother" (2 Cor. i. 1), who had "served" with Paul "in the gospel" (Phil. ii. 19;) that

Titus likewise is described as his "brother" (2 Cor. ii. 13), his "partner and fellow-labourer" with respect to the Corinthians (2 Cor. viii. 23.) All this is very true, and proves conclusively that Timothy and Titus were duly ordained ministers, and as such held the rank of presbyters or elders. But this, so far from proving their equality to Paul, strengthens the proof of their inferiority, by bringing their acknowledged ministerial standing into contrast with the manifest assumption of superiority on Paul's part. His continuing to regulate their movements after their admission to the ministry, shows clearly that he was superior, not only as a minister to private Christians, but as an apostle to mere presbyters or elders.

If it should be alleged, however, that Timothy and Titus were themselves invested with this same superiority, and that it is in this capacity that Paul addresses them, this is a question which can only be determined by an examination of the three epistles. If it be true that Paul's superiority to Timothy and Titus ceased before the date of his epistles to them, we may certainly expect to find the tone of his address to them materially altered, and the habit of express command exchanged for that of brotherly suggestion. And we find indeed many strong expressions of fraternal, or rather of paternal love, but mingled with peremptory and direct commands, as well as incidental intimations of superior authority, upon the writer's part, some of which might be considered dubious or of little moment, if we did not know the mutual relation of the parties at an earlier date. The hypothesis that Timothy had now attained equality of rank with Paul, though not contradicted, is certainly not favoured by those parts of these epistles, in which Paul speaks of having left him at Ephesus for a special purpose (1 Tim. i. 3) and renews the commission under which he acted (v. 18); gives him particular directions for his conduct until he shall come (ch. iii. 14, 15: iv. 13, 14), and summons Timothy to come within a certain time (2 Tim. iv. 21) and take the place of those who had just left him (ch. iv. 9—12,) bringing Paul's cloak and parchments with him (v. 13.)

Titus also is described as being left in Crete by Paul, to finish that which he had left undone (Tit. i. 5), and is required to re-join him, when relieved by Artemas or Tychicus (Tit. iii. 12.) All this goes to prove that no such change had taken place in

the relations of these men to Paul as would make them no longer his inferiors in office. And the same thing, though it could not be directly proved, is certainly corroborated by the numerous advices which he gives them with a view to their personal improvement, as when he exhorts Timothy to hold faith and a good conscience (1 Tim. i. 19), to refuse profane and old wives' fables and exercise himself unto godliness (1 Tim. iv. 7), to give attendance to reading, exhortation and doctrine (v. 13,) to let his proficiency appear to all (v. 15), to take heed to himself and to the doctrine that he may be saved (v. 16), to avoid covetousness and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness (ch. vi. 11), to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life (v. 12), to keep Paul's commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ (v. 14,) to avoid profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science falsely so called (1 Tim. vi. 20; 2 Tim. ii. 16), to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. ii. 1), to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (v. 3), to avoid foolish and unlearned questions (v. 23,) to flee youthful lusts and follow righteousness, faith, charity, and peace (v. 22,) to continue in the things which he had learned of Paul (2 Tim. iii. 14,) and to endure afflictions (2 Tim. iv. 5.)

It may be said, that all these are expressions, which might naturally be used by a man of Paul's celebrity and standing in the church, even to those holding the same office, if much younger than himself, and still more if they were his spiritual children. Admitting this to be a sufficient explanation of the general tone of Paul's epistles, and of his exhortations to mere personal and private duties, will it answer the same purpose, with respect to his authoritative directions for the discharge of their official duties? Can it be supposed that such minute instructions, as to public worship, ordination, discipline, the duties to be enjoined upon different classes of society, as are contained in these epistles, would have been given to any but inferiors in rank and office? Such a hypothesis might be admissible, if every thing else in the epistles favoured it; but not when their whole drift and tenor make it scarcely possible to doubt that Timothy and Titus are addressed as Paul's inferiors. There are several classes of objections to the opposite opinion, every one of which would seem decisive unless countervailed by other circumstances. The general tone of the epistles is almost enough

to show that Paul was their superior in office. It would fail to do so, if there were express recognitions of equality; but there are none. His dictation to them, with respect to the discharge of their official functions, would be almost enough to prove the point. Above all, the distinct allusions to their acting merely as Paul's messengers and delegates, without renouncing their relation to him as his personal attendants, make it almost certain. Now as each of these distinctive features of the three epistles is almost sufficient of itself to prove what we allege, and as none of them detracts from any of the others, but confirms them, we may safely state as the most probable conclusion from the data generally, that the men, to whom these three epistles were addressed, were no less subject to Paul's authority, and consequently no less inferior in official rank, when labouring at Ephesus and Crete, than when attending him in Greece or Asia Minor or Judea.

If any should still think, however, that the supposition of their inferiority is not necessary to explain the tone and contents of these epistles, let them look at the question in another point of view. Let them suppose, though merely for the sake of argument, that these men were not only younger than Paul, and his spiritual children, but inferiors in office, and that Paul, in writing to them, had this inferiority in view, and was influenced by it, both in matter and in manner. How could he, without saying *totidem verbis*, you are my inferiors, have more distinctly conveyed that idea, than he has done here? What form of address, what selection of topics, what turn of expression, what peculiar tone, what allusions to his own superiority and their subjection to him, could have made the matter clearer than it is? If an air of paternal condescension, if repeated exhortations to fidelity, if positive commands as to official acts, if peremptory orders, as to times and places, and express injunctions to return to personal attendance on the writer, do not prove inferiority of rank in those who are addressed, it must be because no proof of the fact is possible, except by formal categorical assertion. If, however, it be true, that Paul addresses these two men precisely as he must have done if they were his inferiors in office, we believe a vast majority of readers will think this a decisive proof that they were so. Nor can it be rejected, with-

out flagrant inconsistency, by those who plead for a perpetual apostleship. The proof of that opinion rests, almost exclusively, upon the fact, that Timothy and Titus are directed to ordain and discipline presbyters, from which it is inferred that they were more themselves. But if their being thus directed can prove their superiority to elders, how much more does Paul's directing them prove his superiority to them. Those very powers, the imputed exercise of which is made a proof that they were more than presbyters, were exercised at Paul's command, and in conformity with his minute instructions. The least that can be argued from this fact is that Paul's superiority to Timothy and Titus is as clearly proved as theirs to presbyters. But this is only a small part of the whole truth; for while the proof of their superiority to presbyters is wholly insufficient, that of Paul's superiority to them is perfect. The former, as we have before seen, rests upon the false assumption that a presbyter could neither be ordained nor disciplined by those of the same order. But the fact of Paul's superiority to Timothy and Titus does not rest upon his having ordained them or acted as their judge; but upon his actual control of their official functions, and their actual subjection to his apostolical authority. The very fact of their ordaining and exercising discipline at all may be described as doubtful, in comparison with that of Paul's governing themselves. That they governed and ordained, is a mere inference from Paul's advising them how they should exercise these powers. But that they themselves were ruled by Paul, is no such inference. The act itself is upon record in these three epistles, which are nothing more nor less than three solemn acts of apostolical authority.

The fact, then, that Timothy and Titus were inferior to Paul, in rank and office, is not only upon all common principles of reasoning, but even upon those which are peculiar to the adverse party, fully established. But if they were inferior to Paul in office, they must either have been presbyters, or something intermediate between that and apostles. The assumption of an intermediate order sweeps away, of course, all arguments to prove that certain persons were apostles, simply because they were superior to presbyters. It also gives a license to assume as many intermediate orders as may be required to

demonstrate different hypotheses. In point of fact, however, it has never been assumed. It is one of the conceded points, on which the parties to this controversy meet, that there was no office in the primitive church system, above that of presbyter, excepting the apostleship. If, then, Timothy and Titus were inferior to Paul, they could not have been more than presbyters, and must in that capacity have exercised the right of ordination and of discipline. If, as a last resort, it be alleged, that these powers were exercised by virtue of a special commission, and not as ordinary functions of the eldership, it still remains true, even granting this assertion, that presbyters were competent to exercise these powers, without being elevated to a higher office. What they were thus occasionally authorized to do by the original apostles, they might still do, even if there were apostles in the church; but if, as we have seen already, there are none, then what was occasionally done by presbyters at first, must now be done habitually by them, as the highest class of officers existing, by divine right, in the church. Much more must they possess this right as the successors of the primitive elders, if the latter, as we have the strongest reason to believe, possessed it, not occasionally merely, but as a necessary function of their office.

The result of our inquiry may be briefly stated thus; that Paul addresses the presbyters of Ephesus, as if the whole care of the church was to devolve on them, representing them as shepherds of Christ's flock, a metaphor implying the possession of the highest powers and employed here in its widest sense, because connected with the prediction of dangers which could only be averted by the exercise of great authority, and also because Peter, in addressing the presbyters of Asia Minor, speaks of them as shepherds, subject to no chief shepherd but the Lord Jesus Christ, and possessing powers which might easily become despotic in their exercise. We find too that Paul elsewhere speaks of the presbyters of Ephesus as "ruling," the word employed being the same used to denote the government of families, and therefore in its application to the church, implying the possession of the highest powers, not excepting those of discipline and ordination. And accordingly we find the ordination of Timothy ascribed to

a presbytery, which, on any natural interpretation of the term, can only mean a body of presbyters acting in that character. We find too that Timothy and Titus, while actually exercising the highest powers now belonging to the ministry, are distinctly recognised as Paul's inferiors in rank and office, and therefore as something less than apostles, and nothing more than presbyters, whether acting in the ordinary course of duty, or by virtue of a special commission.

From these special testimonies, singly and together, we infer that presbyters, in apostolic times, possessed and exercised the highest powers now belonging to the ministry. And having thus established our position by direct proof, we may briefly advert to certain passages and detached expressions, which although they may prove nothing by themselves, and are susceptible of different explanations, and have therefore not been used by us in argument, may nevertheless serve as incidental confirmations of the truth which has already been established. Of these the first which we shall mention is the account of the council at Jerusalem, to which the church of Antioch referred an interesting and important question, sending Paul and Barnabas and others to Jerusalem, "unto the apostles AND ELDERS, about this question." (Acts xv. 2.) "And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the apostles AND ELDERS." (v. 4). "And the apostles AND ELDERS came together, for to consider of the matter;" (v. 6), and after due deliberation and discussion, "it pleased the apostles AND ELDERS (v. 22) to send a letter to the church at Antioch, with this inscription, "The apostles AND ELDERS and brethren send greeting," &c., (v. 23), and we afterwards read that Paul and Silas, in their missionary tour through Asia Minor, "as they went through the cities, delivered unto them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles AND ELDERS which were at Jerusalem." (Acts xvi. 4). All that we now mean to infer from this transaction is that, even while the most of the apostles were still present at Jerusalem, the church there had elders, and that these were not regarded as mere teachers, or leaders in public worship, but as men clothed with authority.

If any should object that the same reasoning would prove the ordinary members of the church to have possessed the same

authority, because it was "the church" that received the messengers from Antioch, (Acts xv. 4), because it was "the apostles and elders WITH THE WHOLE CHURCH" that decided the question (v. 22), and because the epistle was written in the name of "the apostles and elders AND BRETHREN," (v. 23), we answer, first, that though the brethren, or church at large, are mentioned in these cases, they are not in the others which have been already quoted, whereas the elders are invariably named whenever the apostles are; secondly, that, according to the principles of government laid down both in the Old and the New Testament, the church could only act through the apostles and the elders, and especially the latter, who were really the representatives of the church at Jerusalem, so that it does not even certainly appear, that the church-members were in any sense present except in the person of their representatives; the word translated "multitude" in v. 12 being indefinite and relative in meaning; lastly, that we are citing this case only in corroboration of the fact, already proved from other quarters, that the presbyters were rulers, whereas no such proof exists of the powers of government having been exercised by the people generally.

That this constitution of the mother church was copied into others, as they were organized, is plain from the practice of Paul and Barnabas, who, as they passed through Asia Minor, "ordained them elders in every church," (Acts xiv. 23), and from Paul's leaving Titus in Crete to "ordain elders in every city." (Tit. i. 5). The powers of these elders were no doubt the same as in the mother church, and though they are not often mentioned, it is always in a manner to confirm the supposition that they were familiarly regarded as the highest local rulers of the church; as when James says, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church," (Jas. v. 14), and Peter tells the presbyters of Asia Minor, that he is "also an elder," (1 Pet. v. 1), and John calls himself, in the inscriptions of his two epistles, ὁ πρεσβύτερος. That in the last case it denotes the senior apostle, and that in the others it is a generic title for church-officers in general, is no doubt possible; and all that is intended is to point out how completely even the incidental notices of presbyters agree with the hypothesis which we have been defending.

It may be a matter of surprise and even of objection, on the part of some, that so few positive testimonies to the truth of that hypothesis are found in scripture. But let such remember that church-government is very seldom spoken of at all, and ordination scarcely ever, so that in proportion to the space allotted to the general subject, the foregoing proofs may be considered ample. One effect of the comparative neglect of all such matters by the sacred writers, is that something, upon any supposition, is to be supplied by inference or analogy. The only question is, which hypothesis requires least to be conjectured or assumed? As this would be no unfair criterion of truth, we are willing to submit our doctrine to a rigorous comparison, in this respect, with that of our opponents. They admit that the presbyterial office was established in the primitive church and was intended to be permanent, that it was clothed with the important powers of preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments, and that it is repeatedly spoken of in terms which, taken by themselves, would imply the possession of the highest powers now belonging to the ministry. But this conclusion they avoid by assuming that although this office was intended to continue, and entrusted with some functions of the greatest moment, it was not empowered to ordain or exercise supreme authority, that these prerogatives were specially reserved to a superior order. This, however, cannot be maintained without supposing, that on various occasions when the mention of this higher class would seem to have been almost unavoidable, the sacred writers did nevertheless pass it by in silence, and not only pass it by, but apply the very language, which would best describe its powers, to the lower order which had no such powers. However this extraordinary fact may be accounted for, it must be assumed, or the adverse doctrine cannot be maintained. Our own hypothesis, on the contrary, takes words and phrases in their usual sense and their most natural construction, and adds nothing to the facts which are admitted by both parties, but setting out from the conceded fact that presbyters were officers of high rank and entrusted with important powers, it concludes that when they are referred to as the highest local rulers of the churches, they were so in fact; that when certain duties are enjoined upon them, it was meant that they should do them;

in a word, that the obvious and natural meaning of the passages which speak of elders, is the true one, and that no other need be sought by forced constructions or gratuitous assumptions. By the application of this safe and simple method of interpretation, we have reached the conclusion that presbyters, as presbyters, possessed and exercised the highest ministerial powers, including those of discipline and ordination, in the days of the apostles; that the same rights and powers belong to them at present; and that no ministrations can be charged with invalidity, because they are performed under authority derived from presbyters.

ART. VII.—*An Introduction to the New Testament, containing an examination of the most important questions relating to the authority, interpretation, and integrity of the canonical books, with reference to the latest inquiries.* By Samuel Davidson, LL.D. Volume I. The Four Gospels. London: Samuel Bagster & Sons. 1848. 8vo. pp. 430.

IN our last number we gave a very imperfect outline of the history of opinion with respect to the Four Gospels. Had we been acquainted then with the elegant volume now before us, our labour might have been greatly abridged by reference and extracts, and we should certainly have withheld or qualified our closing statement, as to the total want of books in the English language, presenting a correct view of the German speculations without any undue deference to their authority or gratuitous adoption of their principles. The general fact as to this deficiency in English literature is stated by Dr. Davidson himself in still stronger terms than we employed, and with an expression of contempt for the "stereotype-minded," and for those who creep along in "the ruts of hereditary or prevailing opinion," which we think less suited to correct the evil than to raise an unjust prejudice against his own work, as neologizing in its tendency; whereas its chief characteristic is the rare combination of a thorough knowledge of the German writers, with a total freedom from that slavish submission to their dicta,

which so frequently accompanies this kind of learning, both in England and America. As the criticism of the gospels is awakening more and more attention, such a work as that before us will, in all probability, excite the curiosity of many readers, and we therefore think it best, without renewing the discussion of the subject, to describe, as briefly and as clearly as we can, what the author has attempted, and how far he has accomplished it.

The grand merit of the book is that which we have hinted at already, that it shows a thorough and familiar acquaintance with the latest literature of the subject, which, as we have said before, is almost exclusively German. The intrinsic value of a large part of this matter, and the impossibility of utterly excluding it from the English-reading public, makes it highly desirable that those who feel an interest in such inquiries should have access to them, not in a garbled or one-sided shape, but in a fair and ample statement. At the same time, it is equally important that this statement should be made by one who is not infected with the virus of neology, or ashamed or afraid to dissent from the conclusions of the most authoritative German writers. Even a bias towards the opposite extreme of sturdy common-sense and prepossession against specious novelties, may, for obvious reasons, be regarded as a salutary check, in the exposition of these new and strange views to the English reader.

Both these conditions seem to us to be answered in the work before us. The author's knowledge of the recent foreign writers is surprisingly extensive and exact, coming down, so far as we can judge, to the very latest dates, and reaching to the most minute particulars. Nor is it mere bibliographical learning. With a rare patience of attention and facility of acquisition, he has really mastered the contents of this voluminous and complicated literature, stating opinions and authorities, wherever we can follow him, with exemplary fairness and precision. We have no hesitation in affirming that a careful study of this volume is, beyond comparison, the best means known to us, by which an English reader can inform himself, with least expenditure of time and labour, as to the latest forms of speculation with respect to the Four Gospels.

On the other hand, the conservative prejudice or prepossession

sion, which we have represented as desirable in such a case, has influenced the author's mind throughout in a very high degree, it may be, higher than he is himself aware. We have repeatedly been pleased to note the old-fashioned good sense and simplicity with which he sweeps away a fine-spun web of ingenious fallacy, by answers which, however, satisfactory to us and to himself, would be regarded by the subjects of his criticism as nothing more nor less than proofs of his ungerman intellect. Even admitting that he sometimes actually goes too far in this direction, and relies too much upon the straight-forward plain sense of his readers—a quality which there is cause to fear is rapidly decreasing in these fanciful and transcendental times—the general tendency, of which these are occasional excesses, is not only a correct one in itself, and especially entitled to respect when found to co-exist with such familiar knowledge of the writings which have done more than all other causes to discredit and destroy it, but peculiarly safe and re-assuring in the case of one who undertakes the delicate and doubtful task of engrafting German discoveries on the good old stock of English sobriety and solid sense.

What we have now said of our author's anti-neological propensities must not be understood as wholly acquitting him of all undue concession to the new opinions. In some of his departures from the old views, he appears to us to be not only wrong, but inconsistent. Yet even in these cases there is no appearance of a puerile submission to authority, or a morbid love of innovation, but a simple error of judgment, such as might have been committed in any other case of choice between numerous and conflicting views. These exceptions are, moreover, for the most part, such as affect only questions of detail. They do not touch the author's general principles of criticism or his views of inspiration. With respect to these, he is, in spite of his expressed contempt for such, as "stereotype-minded" as we could desire.

There is, however, one intellectual deficiency in the performance which detracts not a little from the safeness and the wholesomeness of its influence, though not in the least from the author's *bona fides* or his personal soundness in the faith. Like almost every other writer who attempts to refute a great variety of errors in a limited space, he sometimes states objections and

difficulties, which he either fails or neglects to answer. It would indeed be almost miraculous if one man, even of the highest powers and the most extensive learning, should be able single-handed, to resist and vanquish the selected subtilties of many cultivated minds. The attempt to do so would be highly presumptuous, if deliberately made. It is not, however, in this light that it is usually viewed by those who undertake so hazardous a task. The concentrated venom of a hundred teeming and erratic minds excites no more apprehension than the sophistries of one, and the defender of the truth is scarcely conscious of fighting against odds. He is also apt to be misled, by having passed through the ordeal himself without a change of his belief, into the error of supposing that the fallacies which failed to hoodwink him will be equally unsuccessful in the case of his own readers. Hence he frequently contents himself with simply stating an objection or a cavil, either wholly without comment, or with a bare description of it as absurd, when perhaps to many readers these very slighted and derided sophisms are as so many drops of deadly venom or the barbs of poisoned arrows, which the wounded mind has neither strength nor skill enough to render harmless.

With this defect, to some extent, it may be, unavoidable in executing such a plan, the work before us is unquestionably chargeable. The author does sometimes leave unanswered what he ought to have refuted or suppressed. Nor can it here be urged in justification, that the false opinion would be known at any rate, because if he repeats it without any antidote, he merely helps to give it currency and multiply the chances of its doing mischief. It is not, however, in this particular form that the mistake in question shows itself most frequently in the work before us. It does not belong to the character or habits of our author's mind to leave the refutation of an error unattempted. But a good will is not all that is required, and the effort is not always as successful as its honesty deserves. In other words, the author's reasoning against the skeptical opinions which he states, is sometimes very unequal to the ingenuity and force with which they are propounded even by himself, but nearly in the words of their original authors.

This defect may arise in part from something in the author's turn of mind and intellectual habits; but we think it is suffi-

ciently accounted for by the peculiar nature of the work itself. It is clearly impossible for any man to muster and marshal such a host of contradictory and complicated theories as a compiler and reporter, and at the same time to exercise his own powers of reasoning and judgment on this mass of heterogeneous materials with complete success. Considering the difficulties of the case, we are far more disposed to wonder that he has been so successful than to complain that he has not been more so.

In reference to what has now been said, the question may arise, how far this imperfection makes the work unfit for circulation, or unsafe to use. To this we answer, that a work of so much erudition is not likely to be carefully perused by any except those who are especially addicted to such studies, and who have already some acquaintance with the subject. To such the volume furnishes a valuable storehouse of materials, which might else be inaccessible, presented almost always in the light most favourable to old and strict opinions, by an author whose own principles are sound, and whose occasional failures to refute what he rejects may only serve to call forth a completer refutation on the part of those who come to the perusal of his work with right dispositions and the necessary literary preparation. As the ablest teacher commonly learns something even from his less distinguished pupils, so the industry and learning of an author may assist readers, far inferior to himself, in the solution of some difficulties which he has, either inadvertently or unavoidably, left without an antidote.

Dr. Davidson's style is among the least of his merits, being often at the same time awkward and ambitious. This is especially apparent when he chooses to expatiate on a topic. The diffuseness, which we have observed in his lectures on Biblical Criticism, and which was no doubt owing, in some measure, to their primary design, has been here corrected by the superabundance of matter to be crowded in a narrow compass. The worst fault chargeable upon the English of this book is a kind of euphemistic circumlocution, to avoid the repetition of the same word, which becomes worse than ludicrous when it leads the author to speak of our Saviour as "that person" or as "that distinguished Being."

The mechanical execution of the work is in the finest English

style. A writer on biblical subjects could not well fall into better hands than those of Samuel Bagster. The typography is certainly most beautiful, and seems to us immaculate. We trust that these external advantages will multiply intelligent readers, not of this volume only, but of those which are to follow it, and of the new edition of the *Biblical Criticism* which we are encouraged to expect, to say nothing of the other works which Dr. Davidson seems called in Providence to write and publish, in the exercise of his vocation as the safest and most skilful introducer of exotic learning, disinfected of exotic infidelity, to English readers.

QUARTERLY LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Important Doctrines of the true Christian Religion explained, demonstrated, and vindicated from popular Errors. Including among others, The Lord's Second Advent; The Divine Character, Unity, Trinity and Person; The Assumption of Humanity and Putting forth, thereby, the power of Redemption; The Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and Salvation by his blood; His Mediation and Atonement; The Justification of a Sinner; Harmony with the Doctrine of a Plurality of Worlds. Being a Series of Lectures delivered at the New Jerusalem church, in Cross Street, Hatton Garden, London. By the Rev. S. Noble. With an Introduction by George Bush. New York: John Allen. Svo. pp. 485.

The above long title gives a clear idea of the nature of this work. It contains twenty-seven popular Lectures on important subjects. It is perhaps the best, and certainly the most accessible, authentic exposition of Swedenborgianism. That system must have a certain power about it as it has lived under a weight of confusion and absurdity which would have long since crushed any ordinary theory to death. It is however only for a very limited class of men that the system has any attraction, or who have any affinity for the system; amiable men, who can believe and disbelieve at will; whose convictions are subject to their wishes, and their wishes determined by their imagination. Men, to whom the conceivable is, for that reason alone, the real. Some gentleman of this class, enamoured with this theory, has been at the expense either of the republication of these Lec-

tures, or of a liberal gratuitous distribution of copies. His request that those who receive the book would submit its doctrines to an impartial examination, is a very large demand. It is surely not a very modest request that a man should throw away not only all his own most intimate convictions, but the faith of the whole church, and begin de novo. It is as though a teacher should require his pupil to unlearn all he knows, and to present his mind as a *tabula rasa*. We think it high time that Mr. Bush should turn to some other vocation than that of a seer. He has seen so many visions, which proved mere illusions, and been so thoroughly convinced one day of what he has no faith in the next, that it would become him to be less frequent in his apparitions under the character of a guide among the things unseen and eternal.

Superstition, its nature, its manifestations, its evils, and the remedy therefor. A Sermon preached in the Government Street church, Mobile, By W. T. Hamilton, D.D., Pastor of said Church. (Published by Request.) Mobile. Svo.

Popery the Punishment of Unbelief. A Sermon delivered before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, at Baltimore, May 26, 1848. By Alexander T. McGill, D.D., Professor in the Western Theological Seminary. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication. 12mo.

The Rev. Leigh Richmond's Letters and Counsels to his children. Selected from his Memoirs and Domestic Portraiture. With an Account of the closing scene of his Life, written by his Daughter. Published by the American Tract Society.

The other Leaf of the Book of Nature and Word of God. pp.

74.

This pamphlet contains two sermons, and a series of notes forming an Appendix of thirty pages. The first sermon is on the words, "For the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." 1 Cor. x. 26, and is a forcible argument in favour of Agrarianism. The writer argues that the earth is by nature common property. He quotes high authority for the maxim that The real foundation of the rights of property is the Law of the Land. He gives at length the famous paragraph from Paley which earned for the facetious Dean the title of "Pigeon Paley," and which probably cost him a bishopric. He applies to his purpose the golden rule, that we must do to others what we would have them do to us. If, says the writer, I have no land, and my neighbour has five hundred acres, I would certainly wish him to give me fifty; or if he has \$50,000 I should be glad to receive \$10,000. Another poor brother would be no less desirous to get his portion of the superfluous wealth of others, until equality was established. He appeals to the equal distribution of the land of Palestine, by the command of God, and to the numerous denunciations of the love of riches, and the no less

numerous exhortations to brotherhood, to be found in the New Testament. In the second sermon there is a glowing exhibition of the evils, of the injustice, the misery and vice connected with the existing laws of property and its unequal distribution. The author is a slave owner. His design is to show, that the arguments of abolitionists are as cogent against property, as against slavery; and that the plea of necessity urged by the rich man at the north, is valid in behalf of the slaveholder at the south. As an argument *ad hominem*, and as a rebuke of the manifest self-righteousness of abolitionists, the sermons are effective. It is, however, dangerous to play with edged tools.

An Essay on the Ecclesiastical History of Scotland. By the Duke of Argyll. Edinburgh: Blackwoods. 8vo.

Observations on Church and State, suggested by the Duke of Argyll's Essay on the Ecclesiastical History of Scotland. Edinburgh and London. Blackwoods. 8vo.

Wilson's Clerical Almanac for Scotland, and Civil and General Register, for 1849; containing complete lists of the ministers of all denominations in Scotland. Edinburgh: Oliphants. 12mo.

Christ on the Mount: a Practical Exposition of the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of the gospel according to Matthew. By the Rev. James Gardner, A. M., M. D. Edinburgh: Bell & Bradfute. 8vo.

Sermons, chiefly practical. By the late Thomas Brown, D. D., minister of Free St. John's Church, Glasgow. With a Memoir by Patrick McFarlan, D. D. Greenock. 8vo.

The Seventh Vial, being an Exposition of the Apocalypse, and in particular of the Seventh Vial, with special reference to the present revolution in Europe. Second Edition, bringing down the Historical Exposition to December, 1848. Edinburgh: Johnstone. 8vo.

Theocracy, or the Principles of the Jewish Religion and Polity, adapted to all Nations and Times. By the Rev. Robert Craig, Rothesay. Edinburgh: Johnstone. 8vo.

A Memoir of Annie McDonald Christie, a Self-taught Cottager, chiefly in her own words, with extracts from her letters and meditations. To which is now added a brief memoir of her grandsons, John and Alexander Bethune. By the Rev. J. Brodie. Edinburgh: Johnstone. 18mo.

Memoirs and Manuscripts of Isobel Hood. By the late Rev. John McDonald, Calcutta. With an introductory notice, by Hugh Miller; third edition. Edinburgh: Johnstone. 18mo.

The Women of the Bible: delineated in a series of sketches of Prominent Females, mentioned in the Holy Scriptures. By a clergyman of the United States. Illustrated by eighteen characteristic steel engravings. Edited by Jonathan M. Wainwright, D. D. pp. 214. Imp. 8vo. 1848. D. Appleton & Co.

The Sacred Poets of England and America. From the earliest period to the present time. Chronologically arranged with biographical and critical notices. By Rufus W. Grisworld. Illustrated with steel engravings. 1848. 8vo. D. Appleton & Co.

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Mrs. Sigourney's Poems; superb engravings. pp. 408. 8vo. Carey & Hart: Philadelphia.

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